This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

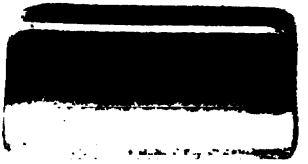
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY

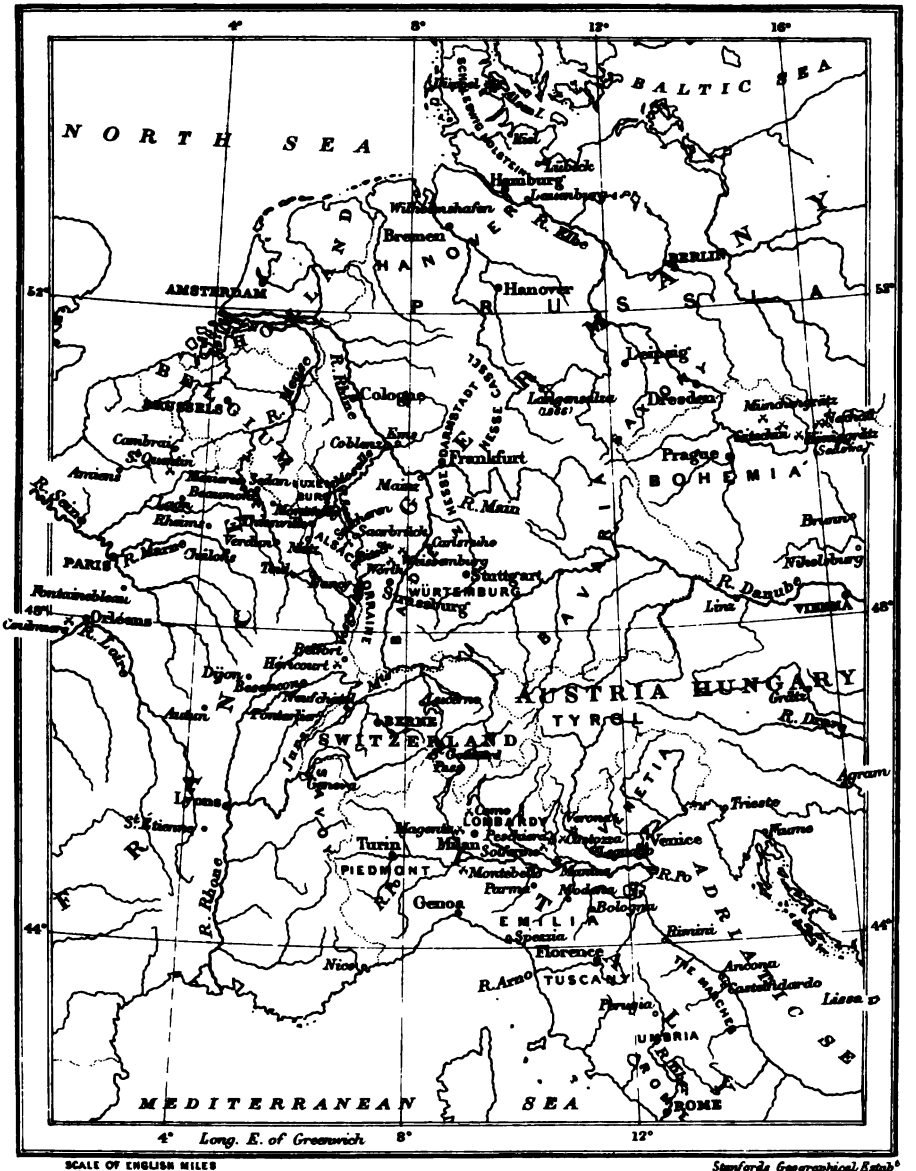
LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.

Class



CAMPAIGNS 1859-71.

Front.



G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York.

THE DEVELOPMENT

OF

THE EUROPEAN NATIONS

1870-1900

BY

J. HOLLAND ROSE, Litt.D.

Late Scholar of Christ's College, Cambridge; Author of "The Life of Napoleon I," etc.

"Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas."

VIRGIL.

WITH MAPS

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME ONE

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
NEW YORK AND LONDON
The Knickerbocker Press
1905

LIBRARY FUND

COPYRIGHT, 1905.
BY
J. HOLLAND ROSE

The Knickerbocker Press, New York

TO

MY WIFE

WITHOUT WHOSE HELP

THIS WORK

COULD NOT HAVE BEEN COMPLETED

217229

LIBRARY OF THE

PREFACE

THE line of Virgil quoted on the title-page represents in the present case a sigh of aspiration, not a pæan of achievement. No historical student, surely, can ever feel the conviction that he has fathomed the depths of that well where Truth is said to lie hid. What, then, must be the feelings of one who ventures into the mazy domain of recent annals, and essays to pick his way through thickets all but untrodden? More than once I have been tempted to give up the quest and turn aside to paths where pioneers have cleared the way. There, at least, the whereabouts of that fabulous well is known and the plummet is ready to hand. Nevertheless, I resolved to struggle through with my task, in the consciousness that the work of a pioneer may be helpful, provided that he carefully notches the track and thereby enables those who come after him to know what to seek and what to avoid.

After all, there is no lack of guides in the present age. The number of memoir-writers and newspaper correspondents is legion; and I have come to believe that they are fully as trustworthy as similar witnesses have been in any age. The very keenness of their rivalry is some guarantee for truth. Doubtless competition for good "copy" occasionally leads to artful embroidering on humdrum actuality, but, after spending much time in scanning similar embroidery in the literature of the Napoleonic era, I un-

hesitatingly place the work of Archibald Forbes, and that of several knights of the pen still living, far above the delusive tinsel of Marbot, Thiébault, and Ségur. I will go farther and say that, if we could find out what were the sources used by Thucydides, we should notice qualms of misgiving shoot through the circles of scientific historians as they contemplated his majestic work. In any case, I may appeal to the example of the great Athenian in support of the thesis that to undertake to write contemporary history is no vain thing.

Above and beyond the accounts of memoir-writers and newspaper correspondents there are Blue Books. I am well aware that they do not always contain the whole truth. Sometimes the most important items are of necessity omitted. But the information which they contain is enormous; and, seeing that the rules of the public service keep the original records in Great Britain closed for well-nigh a century, only the most fastidious can object to the use of the wealth of materials given to the world in *Parliamentary Papers*.

Besides these published sources there is the fund of information possessed by public men and the "well-informed" of various grades. Unfortunately this is rarely accessible, or only under conventional restrictions. Here and there I have been able to make use of it without any breach of trust; and to those who have enlightened my darkness I am very grateful. The illumination, I know, is only partial; but I hope that its effect, in respect to the twilight of diplomacy, may be compared to that of the Aurora Borealis lights.

After working at my subject for some time, I found it desirable to limit it to events which had a distinctly

formative influence on the development of European States. On questions of motive and policy I have generally refrained from expressing a decided verdict, seeing that these are always the most difficult to probe; and facile dogmatism on them is better fitted to omniscient leaderettes than to the pages of an historical work. At the same time, I have not hesitated to pronounce a judgment on these questions, and to differ from other writers, where the evidence has seemed to me decisive. To quote one instance, I reject the verdict of most authorities on the question of Bismarck's treatment of the Ems telegram, and of its effect in the negotiations with France in July, 1870.

For the most part, however, I have dealt only with external events, pointing out now and again the part which they have played in the great drama of human action still going on around us. This limitation of aim has enabled me to take only specific topics, and to treat them far more fully than is done in the brief chronicle of facts presented by MM. Lavisse and Rambaud in the concluding volume of their *Histoire Générale*. Where a series of events began in the year 1899 or 1900, and did not conclude before the time with which this narrative closes, I have left it on one side. Obviously the Boer War falls under this head. Owing to lack of space my references to the domestic concerns of the United Kingdom have been brief. I have regretfully omitted one imperial event of great importance, the formation of the Australian Commonwealth. After all, that concerned only the British race; and in my survey of the affairs of the Empire I have treated only those which directly affected other nations as well, namely the Afghan and Egyptian questions and the Partition of Africa. Here

I have sought to show the connection with "world politics," and I trust that even specialists will find something new and suggestive in this method of treatment.

In attempting to write a history of contemporary affairs, I regard it as essential to refer to the original authority, or authorities, in the case of every important statement. I have sought to carry out this rule (though at the cost of great additional toil) because it enables the reader to check the accuracy of the narrative and to gain hints for further reading. To compile bibliographies, where many new books are coming out every year, is a useless task; but exact references to the sources of information never lose their value.

My thanks are due to many who have helped me in this undertaking. Among them I may name Sir Charles Dilke, M.P., Mr. James Bryce, M.P., and Mr. Chedo Mijatovich, who have given me valuable advice on special topics. My obligations are also due to a subject of the Czar, who has placed his knowledge at my service, but for obvious reasons does not wish his name to be known. Mr. Bernard Pares, M.A., of the University of Liverpool, has very kindly read over the proofs of the early chapters, and has offered most helpful suggestions. Messrs. G. Bell & Sons have granted me permission to make use of the plans of the chief battles of the Franco-German War from Mr. Hooper's work, *Sedan and the Downfall of the Second Empire*, published by them. To Mr. H. W. Wilson, author of *Ironclads in Action*, my thanks are also due for permission to make use of the plan illustrating the fighting at Alexandria in 1882.

J. H. R.

July, 1905.

CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION 1

CHAPTER I

THE CAUSES OF THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR 28

CHAPTER II

FROM WÖRTH TO GRAVELOTTE 58

CHAPTER III

SEDAN 85

CHAPTER IV

THE FOUNDING OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC 109

CHAPTER V

THE FOUNDING OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC (*Continued*) . 135

CHAPTER VI

THE GERMAN EMPIRE 153

CHAPTER VII

THE EASTERN QUESTION 184

CHAPTER VIII

PAGE

THE RUSSO-TURKISH WAR 225

CHAPTER IX

THE BALKAN SETTLEMENT 264

CHAPTER X

THE MAKING OF BULGARIA 299

CHAPTER XI

NIHILISM AND ABSOLUTISM IN RUSSIA 344

MAPS AND PLANS

	PAGE
MAP OF THE CAMPAIGNS OF 1859–71 . . *Frontispiece*	
SKETCH MAP OF THE DISTRICT BETWEEN METZ AND THE RHINE	63
PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF WÖRTH	70
PLAN OF THE BATTLES OF REZONVILLE AND GRAVELOTTE .	81
PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF SEDAN	94
MAP OF BULGARIA	231
PLAN OF PLEVNA	253
MAP OF THE TREATIES OF BERLIN AND STEFANO . . .	285
MAP OF THESSALY	296

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUROPEAN NATIONS

INTRODUCTION

"The movements in the masses of European peoples are divided and slow, and their progress interrupted and impeded, because they are such great and unequally formed masses; but the preparation for the future is widely diffused, and . . . the promises of the age are so great that even the most faint-hearted rouse themselves to the belief that a time has arrived in which it is a privilege to live."—GERVINUS, 1853.

THE Roman poet Lucretius in an oft-quoted passage describes the satisfaction that naturally fills the mind when from some safe vantage-ground one looks forth on travellers tossed about on the stormy deep. We may perhaps use the poet's not very altruistic words as symbolising many of the feelings with which, at the dawn of the twentieth century, we look back over the stormy waters of the century that has passed away. Some congratulation on this score is justifiable, especially as those wars and revolutions have served to build up States that are far stronger than their predecessors, in proportion as they correspond more nearly with the desires of the nations that compose them.

As we gaze at the revolutions and wars that form the storm-centres of the past century, we can now see some of

the causes that brought about those storms. If we survey them with discerning eye, we soon begin to see that, in the main, the cyclonic disturbances had their origins in two great natural impulses of the civilised races of mankind. The first of these forces is that great impulse towards individual liberty, which we name Democracy; the second is that impulse, scarcely less mighty and elemental, that prompts men to effect a close union with their kith and kin; this we may term Nationality.

Now, it is true that these two forces have not led up to the last and crowning phase of human development, as their enthusiastic champions at one time asserted that they would; far from that, they are accountable, especially so the force of Nationality, for numerous defects in the life of the several peoples; and the national principle is at this very time producing great and needless friction in the dealings of nations. Yet, granting all this, it still remains true that Democracy and Nationality have been the two chief formative influences in the political development of Europe during the nineteenth century.

In no age of the world's history have these two impulses worked with so triumphant an activity. They have not always been endowed with living force. Among many peoples they lay dormant for ages and were only called to life by some great event, such as the intolerable oppression of a despot or of a governing caste that crushed the liberties of the individual, or the domination of an alien people over one that obstinately refused to be assimilated. Sometimes the spark that kindled vital consciousness was the flash of a poet's genius, or the heroism of some sturdy son of the soil. The causes of awakening have been infinitely various, and have never wholly died away; but it is the

special glory of the nineteenth century that races which had hitherto lain helpless and well-nigh dead rose to manhood as if by magic, and shed their blood like water in the effort to secure a free and unfettered existence both for the individual and the nation. It is a true saying of the German historian, Gervinus, "The history of this age will no longer be only a relation of the lives of great men and of princes, but a biography of nations."

At first sight, this illuminating statement seems to leave out of count the career of the mighty Napoleon. But it does not. The great Emperor unconsciously called into vigorous life the forces of Democracy and Nationality both in Germany and in Italy where there had been naught but servility and disunion. His career, if viewed from our present standpoint, falls into two portions: first, that in which he figured as the champion of Revolutionary France and the liberator of Italy from foreign and domestic tyrants; and, secondly, as the imperial autocrat who conquered and held down a great part of Europe in his attempt to ruin British commerce. In the former of these enterprises he had the new forces of the age acting with him and endowing him with seemingly resistless might; in the latter part of his life he mistook his place in the economy of Nature, and by his violation of the principles of individual liberty and racial kinship in Spain and Central Europe, assured his own downfall.

The greatest battle of the century was the tremendous strife that for three days surged to and fro around Leipzig in the month of October, 1813, when Russians, Prussians, Austrians, Swedes, together with a few Britons, Hanoverians, and finally his own Saxon allies, combined to shake the imperial yoke from the neck of the Germanic peoples.

This *Völkerschlacht* (Battle of the Peoples), as the Germans term it, decided that the future of Europe was not to be moulded by the imperial autocrat, but by the will of the princes and nations whom his obstinacy had embattled against him. Far from recognising the verdict, the great man struggled on until the pertinacity of the allies finally drove him from power and assigned to France practically the same boundaries that she had had in 1791, before the time of her mighty expansion. That is to say, the nation which in its purely democratic form had easily overrun and subdued the neighbouring States in the time of their old, inert, semi-feudal existence, was overthrown by them when their national consciousness had been trampled into being by the legions of the great Emperor.

In 1814, and again after Waterloo, France was driven in on herself, and resumed something like her old position in Europe, save that the throne of the Bourbons never acquired any solidity—the older branch of that family being unseated by the Revolution of 1830. In the centre of the Continent, the old dynasties had made common cause with the peoples in the national struggles of 1813–14, and therefore enjoyed more consideration—a fact which enabled them for a time to repress popular aspirations for constitutional rule and national unity.

Nevertheless, by the Treaties of Vienna (1814–15) the centre of Europe was more solidly organised than ever before. In place of the effete institution known as the Holy Roman Empire, which Napoleon swept away in 1806, the Central States were reorganised in the German Confederation—a cumbrous and ineffective league in which Austria held the presidency. Austria also gained Venetia and Lombardy in Italy. The acquisition of the fertile

Rhine Province by Prussia brought that vigorous State up to the bounds of Lorraine and made her the natural protectress of Germany against France. Russia acquired complete control over nearly the whole of the former kingdom of Poland. Thus, the Powers that had been foremost in the struggle against Napoleon now gained most largely in the redistribution of lands in 1814–15, while the States that had been friendly to him now suffered for their devotion. Italy was split up into a mosaic of States; Saxony ceded nearly the half of her lands to Prussia; Denmark yielded up her ancient possession, Norway, to the Swedish Crown.

In some respects the triumph of the national principle, which had brought victory to the old dynasties, strengthened the European fabric. The Treaties of Vienna brought the boundaries of States more nearly into accord with racial interests and sentiments than had been the case before; but in several instances those interests and feelings were chafed or violated by designing or short-sighted statesmen. The Germans, who had longed for an effective national union, saw with indignation that the constitution of the new Germanic Confederation left them under the control of the rulers of the component States and of the very real headship exercised by Austria, which was always used to repress popular movements. The Italians, who had also learned from Napoleon the secret that they were in all essentials a nation, deeply resented the domination of Austria in Lombardy-Venetia and the parcelling out of the rest of the peninsula between reactionary kings, somnolent dukes, and obscurantist clergy. The Belgians likewise protested against the enforced union with Holland in what was then called the Kingdom of the United

Netherlands (1815–30). In the east of Europe the Poles struggled in vain against the fate which once more partitioned them between Russia, Austria, and Prussia. The Germans of Holstein, Schleswig, and Lauenburg submitted uneasily to the Danish rule; and only under the stress of demonstrations by the allies did the Norwegians accept the union with Sweden.

It should be carefully noted that these were the very cases which caused most of the political troubles in the following period. In fact, most of the political occurrences on the Continent in the years 1815 to 1870—the revolts, revolutions, and wars, that give a special character to the history of the century—resulted directly from the bad or imperfect arrangements of the Congress of Vienna and of the so-called Holy Alliance of the monarchs who sought to perpetuate them. The effect of this widespread discontent was not felt at once. The peoples were too exhausted by the terrific strain of the Napoleonic wars to do much for a generation or more, save in times of popular excitement. Except in the south-east of Europe, where Greece, with the aid of Russia, Britain, and France, wrested her political independence from the grasp of the Sultan (1827), the forty years that succeeded Waterloo were broken by no important war; but they were marked by oft-recurring unrest and sedition. Thus, when the French Revolution of 1830 overthrew the reactionary dynasty of the elder Bourbons, the universal excitement caused by this event endowed the Belgians with strength sufficient to shake off the heavy yoke of the Dutch; while in Italy, Germany, and Poland the democrats and nationalists (now working generally in accord) made valiant but unsuccessful efforts to achieve their ideals.

The same was the case in 1848. The excitement, which this time originated in Italy, spread to France, overthrew the throne of Louis Philippe (of the younger branch of the French Bourbons), and bade fair to roll half of the crowns of Europe into the gutter. But these spasmodic efforts of the democrats speedily failed. Inexperience, disunion, and jealousy paralysed their actions and yielded the victory to the old Governments. Frenchmen, in dismay at the seeming approach of communism and anarchy, fell back upon the odd expedient of a Napoleonic Republic, which in 1852 was easily changed by Louis Napoleon into an Empire modelled on that of his far greater uncle. The democrats of Germany achieved some startling successes over their repressive Governments in the spring of the year 1848, only to find that they could not devise a working constitution for the Fatherland; and the deputies who met at the federal capital, Frankfurt, to unify Germany "by speechifying and majorities," saw power slip back little by little into the hands of the monarchs and princes. In the Austrian Empire nationalist claims and strivings led to a very Babel of discordant talk and action, amidst which the young Hapsburg ruler, Francis Joseph, thanks to Russian military aid, was able to triumph over the valour of the Hungarians and the devotion of their champion, Kossuth.

In Italy the same sad tale was told. In the spring of that year of revolutions, 1848, the rulers in quick succession granted constitutions to their subjects. The reforming Pope, Pius IX., and the patriotic King of Sardinia, Charles Albert, also made common cause with their peoples in the effort to drive out the Austrians from Lombardy-Venetia; but the Pope and all the potentates except Charles Albert speedily deserted the popular cause; friction

between the King and the republican leaders, Mazzini and Garibaldi, further weakened the nationalists, and the Austrians had little difficulty in crushing Charles Albert's forces, whereupon he abdicated in favour of his son, Victor Emmanuel II. (1849). The Republics set up at Rome and Venice struggled valiantly for a time against great odds, Mazzini, Garibaldi, and their volunteers being finally overborne at the Eternal City by the French troops whom Louis Napoleon sent to restore the Pope (June, 1849); while, two months later, Venice surrendered to the Austrians whom she had long held at bay. The Queen of the Adriatic under the inspiring dictatorship of Manin had given a remarkable example of orderly constitutional government in time of siege.

It seemed to be the lot of the nationalists and democrats to produce leaders who could thrill the imagination of men by lofty teachings and sublime heroism; who could, in a word, achieve everything but success. A poetess, who looked forth from Casa Guidi windows upon the tragi-comedy of Florentine failure in those years, wrote that what was needed was a firmer union, a more practical and intelligent activity, on the part both of the people and of the future leader:

> A land's brotherhood
> Is most puissant: men, upon the whole,
> Are what they can be,—nations, what they would.
>
> Will therefore to be strong, thou Italy!
> Will to be noble! Austrian Metternich
> Can fix no yoke unless the neck agree.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Whatever hand shall grasp this oriflamme,
> Whatever man (last peasant or first Pope·
> Seeking to free his country) shall appear,
> Teach, lead, strike fire into the masses, fill

These empty bladders with fine air, insphere
These wills into a unity of will,
And make of Italy a nation—dear
And blessed be that man!

When Elizabeth Barrett Browning penned those lines she cannot have surmised that two men were working their way up the rungs of the political ladder in Piedmont and Prussia, whose keen intellects and masterful wills were to weld their Fatherlands into indissoluble union within the space of one momentous decade. These men were Cavour and Bismarck.

It would far exceed the limits of space of this brief Introduction to tell, except in the briefest outline, the story of the plodding preparation and far-seeing diplomacy by which these statesmen raised their respective countries from depths of humiliation to undreamt-of heights of triumph. The first thing was to restore the prestige of their States. No people can be strong in action that has lost belief in its own powers and has allowed its neighbours openly to flout it. The history of the world has shown again and again that politicians who allow their country to be regarded as *une quantité négligeable* bequeath to some able successor a heritage of struggle and war—struggle for the nation to recover its self-respect, and war to regain consideration and fair treatment from others. However much frothy talkers in their clubs may decry the claims of national prestige, no great statesman has ever underrated their importance. Certainly the first aim both of Cavour and Bismarck was to restore self-respect and confidence to their States after the humiliations and the dreary isolation of those dark years, 1848–51. We will glance, first, at the resurrection (*risorgimento*) of the little Kingdom of Sardinia, which was destined to unify Italy.

Charles Albert's abdication immediately after his defeat by the Austrians left no alternative to his son and successor, Victor Emmanuel II., but that of signing a disastrous peace with Austria. In a short time the stout-hearted young King called to his councils Count Cavour, the second son of a noble Piedmontese family, but of firmly Liberal principles, who resolved to make the little kingdom the centre of enlightenment and hope for despairing Italy. He strengthened the constitution (the only one out of many granted in 1848 that survived the time of reaction); he reformed the tariff in the direction of Free Trade; and during the course of the Crimean War he persuaded his sovereign to make an active alliance with France and England, so as to bind them by all the claims of honour to help Sardinia in the future against Austria. The occasion was most opportune; for Austria was then suspected and disliked both by Russia and the Western Powers owing to her policy of armed neutrality. Nevertheless the reward of Cavour's diplomacy came slowly and incompletely. By skilfully vague promises (never reduced to writing) Cavour induced Napoleon III. to take up arms against Austria; but, after the great victory of Solferino (June 24, 1859), the French Emperor enraged the Italians by breaking off the struggle before the allies recovered the great province of Venetia, which he had pledged himself to do. Worse still, he required the cession of Savoy and Nice to France, if the Central Duchies and the northern part of the Papal States joined the Kingdom of Sardinia, as they now did. Thus, the net result of Napoleon's intervention in Italy was his acquisition of Savoy and Nice (at the price of Italian hatred), and the gain of Lombardy and the central districts for the national cause (1859–60).

The agony of mind caused by this comparative failure undermined Cavour's health; but in the last months of his life he helped to impel and guide the revolutionary elements in Italy to an enterprise that ended in a startling and momentous triumph. This was nothing less than the overthrow of Bourbon rule in Sicily and Southern Italy by Garibaldi. Thanks to Cavour's connivance, this dashing republican organised an expedition of about one thousand volunteers near Genoa, set sail for Sicily, and by a few blows shivered the chains of tyranny in that island. It is noteworthy that British war-ships lent him covert but most important help at Palermo and again in his crossing to the mainland; this timely aid and the presence of a band of Britons in his ranks laid the foundation of that friendship which has ever since united the two nations. In Calabria the hero met with the feeblest resistance from the Bourbon troops and the wildest of welcomes from the populace. At Salerno he took tickets for Naples and entered the enemy's capital by railway train (September 7th). Then he purposed, after routing the Bourbon force north of the city, to go on and attack the French at Rome and proclaim a united Italy.

Cavour took care that he should do no such thing. The Piedmontese statesman knew when to march onwards and when to halt. As his compatriot, Manzoni, said of him, "Cavour has all the prudence and all the imprudence of the true statesman." He had dared and won in 1855–59, and again in secretly encouraging Garibaldi's venture. Now it was time to stop in order to consolidate the gains to the national cause.

The leader of the red-shirts, having done what no king could do, was thenceforth to be controlled by the monarchy

of the north. Victor Emmanuel came in as the *deus ex machina;* his troops pressed southwards, occupying the eastern part of the Papal States in their march, and joined hands with the Garibaldians to the north of Naples, thus preventing the collision with France which the irregulars would have brought about. Even as it was, Cavour had hard work to persuade Napoleon that this was the only way of curbing Garibaldi and preventing the erection of a South Italian Republic; but finally the French Emperor looked on uneasily while the Pope's eastern territories were violated, and while the cause of Italian Unity was assured at the expense of the Pontiff whom France was officially supporting in Rome. A *plébiscite*, or mass vote, of the people of Sicily, South Italy, and the eastern and central parts of the Papal States, was resorted to by Cavour in order to throw a cloak of legality over these irregular proceedings. The device pleased Napoleon, and it resulted in an overwhelming vote in favour of annexation to Victor Emmanuel's kingdom. Thus, in March, 1861, the soldier-king was able amidst universal acclaim to take the title of King of Italy. Florence was declared to be the capital of the new realm, which embraced all parts of Italy except the province of Venetia, pertaining to Austria, and the "Patrimonium Petri," that is, Rome and its vicinity, still held by the Pope and garrisoned by the French. The former of these was to be regained for *la patria* in 1866, the latter in 1870, in consequence of the mighty triumphs then achieved by the principle of nationality in Prussia and Germany. To these triumphs we must now briefly advert.

No one who looked at the state of European politics in 1861 could have imagined that in less than ten years Prussia would have waged three wars and humbled the might of

Austria and France. At that time she showed no signs of exceptional vigour; she had as yet produced no leaders so inspiring as Mazzini and Garibaldi, no statesman so able as Cavour. Her new king, William, far from arousing the feelings of growing enthusiasm that centred in Victor Emmanuel, was more and more distrusted and disliked by Liberals for the policy of militarism on which he had just embarked. In fact, the Hohenzollern dynasty was passing into a "conflict time" with its Parliament which threatened to impair the influence of Prussia abroad and to retard her recovery from the period of humiliations through which she had recently passed.

A brief recital of those humiliations is desirable as showing, firstly, the suddenness with which the affairs of a nation may go to ruin in slack and unskilful hands, and, secondly, the immense results that can be achieved in a few years by a small band of able men who throw their whole heart into the work of national regeneration.

The previous ruler, Frederick William IV., was a gifted and learned man, but he lacked soundness of judgment and strength of will—qualities which are of more worth in governing than graces of the intellect. At the time of the revolutionary outbreaks of 1848 he capitulated to the Berlin mob and declared for a constitutional régime in which Prussia should merge herself in Germany; but when the excesses of the democrats had weakened their authority, he put them down by military force, refused the German Crown offered him by the popularly elected German Parliament assembled at Frankfurt-on-the-Main (April, 1849); and thereupon attempted to form a smaller union of States, namely, Prussia, Saxony, and Hanover. This Three Kings' League, as it was called, soon came to an end; for it did not

satisfy the nationalists who wished to see Germany united, the constitutionalists who aimed at the supremacy of Parliament, or the friends of the old order of things. The vacillations of Frederick William and the unpractical theorisings of the German Parliament at Frankfurt having aroused general disgust, Austria found little difficulty in restoring the power of the old Germanic Confederation in September, 1850. Strong in her alliance with Russia, she next compelled Frederick William to sign the Convention of Olmütz (November, 1850). By this humiliating compact he agreed to forbear helping the German nationalists in Schleswig-Holstein to shake off the oppressive rule of the Danes; to withdraw Prussian troops from Hesse-Cassel and Baden, where strifes had broken out; and to acknowledge the supremacy of the old Federal Diet under the headship of Austria. Thus, it seemed that the Prussian monarchy was a source of weakness and disunion for North Germany, and that Austria, backed up by the might of Russia, must long continue to lord it over the cumbrous Germanic Confederation.

But a young country squire, named Bismarck, even then resolved that the Prussian monarchy should be the means of strengthening and binding together the Fatherland. The resolve bespoke the patriotism of a sturdy, hopeful nature; and the young Bismarck was nothing if not patriotic, sturdy, and hopeful. The son of an ancient family in the Mark of Brandenburg, he brought to his life-work powers inherited from a line of fighting ancestors; and his mind was no less robust than his body. Quick at mastering a mass of details, he soon saw into the heart of a problem, and his solution of it was marked both by unfailing skill and by sound common-sense as to the choice of men and

means. In some respects he resembles Napoleon the Great. Granted that he was his inferior in the width of vision and the versatility of gifts that mark a world-genius, yet he was his equal in diplomatic resourcefulness and in the power of dealing lightning strokes; while his possession of the priceless gift of moderation endowed his greatest political achievements with a soundness and solidity never possessed by those of the mighty conqueror who "sought to give the *mot d'ordre* to the universe." If the figure of the Prussian does not loom so large on the canvas of universal history as that of the Corsican—if he did not tame a Revolution, remodel society, and reorganise a continent—be it remembered that he made a United Germany, while Napoleon the Great left France smaller and weaker than he found her.

Bismarck's first efforts, like those of Cavour for Sardinia, were directed to the task of restoring the prestige of his State. Early in his official career, the Prussian patriot urged the expediency of befriending Russia during the Crimean War, and he thus helped on that *rapprochement* between Berlin and St. Petersburg which brought the mighty triumphs of 1866 and 1870 within the range of possibility. In 1857 Frederick William became insane; and his brother William took the reins of Government as Regent, and early in 1861 as King. The new ruler was less gifted than his unfortunate brother; but his homely common-sense and tenacious will strengthened Prussian policy where it had been weakest. He soon saw the worth of Bismarck, employed him in high diplomatic positions, and when the royal proposals for strengthening the army were decisively rejected by the Prussian House of Representatives, he speedily sent for Bismarck to act as Minister-President (Prime Minister) and "tame" the

refractory Parliament. The constitutional crisis was becoming more and more acute when a great national question came into prominence owing to the action of the Danes in Schleswig-Holstein affairs.

Without entering into the very tangled web of customs, treaties, and dynastic claims that made up the Schleswig-Holstein question, we may here state that those Duchies were by ancient law very closely connected together, that the King of Denmark was only Duke of Schleswig-Holstein, and that the latter duchy, wholly German in population, formed part of the Germanic Confederation. Latterly the fervent nationalists in Denmark, while leaving Holstein to its German connections, had resolved thoroughly to "Danify" Schleswig, the northern half of which was wholly Danish, and they pressed on this policy by harsh and intolerant measures, making it difficult or well-nigh impossible for the Germans to have public worship in their own tongue and to secure German teachers for their children in the schools. Matters were already in a very strained state, when, shortly before the death of King Frederick VII. of Denmark (November, 1863), the Rigsraad at Copenhagen sanctioned a constitution for Schleswig which would practically have made it a part of the Danish monarchy. The King gave his assent to it, an act which his successor, Christian IX., ratified.

Now, this action violated the last treaty, that signed by the Powers at London in 1852, which settled the affairs of the Duchies; and Bismarck therefore had strong ground for appealing to the Powers concerned, as also to the German Confederation, against this breach of treaty obligations. The Powers, especially England and France, sought to set things straight, but the efforts of our Foreign Minis-

ter, Lord John Russell, had no effect. The German Confederation also refused to take any steps about Schleswig as being outside its jurisdiction. Bismarck next persuaded Austria to help Prussia in defeating Danish designs on that duchy. The Danes, on the other hand, counted on the unofficial expressions of sympathy which came from the people of Great Britain and France at sight of a small State menaced by two powerful monarchies. In fact, the whole situation was complicated by this explosion of feeling, which seemed to the Danes to portend the armed intervention of the Western States, especially England, on their behalf. As far as is known, no official assurance to that effect ever went forth from London. In fact, it is certain that Queen Victoria absolutely forbade any such step; but the mischief done by sentimental orators, heedless newspaper editors, and factious busy bodies, could not be undone. As Lord John Russell afterwards stated in a short *Essay on the Policy of England:* "It pleased some English advisers of great influence to meddle in this affair; they were successful in thwarting the British Government, and in the end, with the professed view, and perhaps the real intention, of helping Denmark, their friendship tended to deprive her of Holstein and Schleswig altogether." This final judgment of a veteran statesman is worth quoting as showing his sense of the mischief done by well-meant but misguided sympathy, which pushed the Danes on to ruin and embittered our relations with Prussia for many years.

Not that the conduct of the German Powers was flawless. On January 16, 1864, they sent to Copenhagen a demand for the withdrawal of the constitution for Schleswig within two days. The Danish Foreign Minister pointed out that, as the Rigsraad was not in session, this could not possibly

be done within two days. In this last step, then, the German Powers were undoubtedly the aggressors.[1] The Prussian troops were ready near the River Eider, and at once invaded Schleswig. The Danes were soon beaten on the mainland; then a pause occurred, during which a conference of the Powers concerned was held at London. It has been proved by the German historian, von Sybel, that the first serious suggestion to Prussia that she should take both the Duchies came secretly from Napoleon III. It was in vain that Lord John Russell suggested a sensible compromise, namely, the partition of Schleswig between Denmark and Germany according to the language-frontier inside the Duchy. To this the belligerents demurred on points of detail, the Prussian representative asserting that he would not leave a single German under Danish rule. The war was therefore resumed, and ended in a complete defeat for the weaker State, which finally surrendered both Duchies to Austria and Prussia (1864).[2]

The question of the sharing of the Duchies now formed one of the causes of the far greater war between the victors; but, in truth, it was only part of the much larger question,

[1] Lord Wodehouse (afterwards Earl of Kimberley) was at that time sent on a special mission to Copenhagen. When his official correspondence is published, it will probably throw light on many points.

[2] Sybel, *Die Begründung des deutschen Reiches*, iii., pp. 299–344; Débidour, *Hist. diplomatique de l'Europe*, ii., pp. 261–273; Lowe, *Life of Bismarck*, i., chap. vi.; Headlam, *Bismarck*, chap. viii.: Lord Malmesbury, *Memoirs of an ex-Minister*, pp. 584–593 (small edition); Spencer Walpole, *Life of Lord J. Russell*, ii., pp. 396–411.

In several respects the cause of ruin to Denmark in 1863–64 bears a remarkable resemblance to that which produced war in South Africa in 1899, viz., high-handed action of a minority towards men whom they treated as Outlanders, the stiff-necked obstinacy of the smaller State, and reliance on the vehement but (probably) unofficial offers of help or intervention by other nations.

which had agitated Germany for centuries, whether the balance of power should belong to the North or the South. Bismarck also saw that the time was nearly ripe for settling this matter once for all in favour of Prussia; but he had hard work even to persuade his own sovereign; while the Prussian Parliament, as well as public opinion throughout Germany, was violently hostile to his schemes and favoured the claims of the young Duke of Augustenburg to the Duchies—claims that had much show of right. Matters were patched up for a time between the two German States by the Convention of Gastein (August, 1865), while in reality each prepared for war and sought to gain allies.

Here again Bismarck was successful. After vainly seeking to *buy* Venetia from the Austrian Court, Italy agreed to side with Prussia against that Power in order to wrest by force a province which she could not hope to gain peaceably. Russia, too, was friendly to the Court of Berlin, owing to the help which the latter had given her in crushing the formidable revolt of the Poles in 1863. It remained to keep France quiet. In this Bismarck thought he had succeeded by means of interviews which he held with Napoleon III. at Biarritz (November, 1865). What there transpired is not clearly known. That Bismarck played on the Emperor's foible for oppressed nationalities, in the case of Italy, is fairly certain; that he fed him with hopes of gaining Belgium, or a slice of German land, is highly probable, and none the less so because he later on indignantly denied in the Reichstag that he ever "held out the prospect to anybody of ceding a single German village, or even as much as a clover-field." In any case Napoleon seems to have promised to observe neutrality—not because he loved Prussia, but because he expected the German Powers to wear one

another out and thus leave him master of the situation. In common with most of the wiseacres of those days he believed that Prussia and Italy would ultimately fall before the combined weight of Austria and of the German States, which closely followed her in the Confederation; whereupon he could step in and dictate his own terms.[1]

Bismarck and the leaders of the Prussian army had few doubts as to the result. They were determined to force on the war, and early in June, 1866, brought forward proposals at the Frankfurt Diet for the "reform" of the German Confederation, the chief of them being the exclusion of Austria, the establishment of a German Parliament elected by manhood suffrage, and the formation of a North German army commanded by the King of Prussia.

A great majority of the Federal Diet rejected these proposals, and war speedily broke out, Austria being supported by nearly all the German States except the two Mecklenburgs.

The weight of numbers was against Prussia, even though she had the help of the Italians operating against Venetia. On that side Austria was completely successful, as also in a sea-fight near Lissa in the Adriatic; but in the north the Hapsburgs and their German allies soon found out that

[1] Busch, *Our Chancellor*, ii., p. 17 (Eng. edit.); Débidour, *Histoire diplomatique de l'Europe* (1814–1878), ii., pp. 291–293. Lord Loftus in his *Diplomatic Reminiscences* (ii., p. 280) says: "So satisfied was Bismarck that he could count on the neutrality of France, that no defensive military measures were taken on the Rhine and western frontier. He had no fears of Russia on the eastern frontier, and was therefore able to concentrate the military might of Prussia against Austria and her South German allies."

Light has been thrown on the bargainings between Italy and Prussia by the *Memoirs of General Govone*, who found Bismarck a hard bargainer.

organisation, armament, and genius count for more than numbers. The great organiser, von Roon, had brought Prussia's citizen army to a degree of efficiency that surprised every one; and the quick-firing "needle-gun" dealt havoc and terror among the enemy. Using to the full the advantage of her central position against the German States, Prussia speedily worsted their isolated and badly handled forces, while her chief armies overthrew those of Austria and Saxony in Bohemia. The Austrian plan of campaign had been to invade Prussia by two armies—a comparatively small force advancing from Cracow as a base into Silesia, while another, acting from Olmütz, advanced through Bohemia to join the Saxons and march on Berlin, some 50,000 Bavarians joining them in Bohemia for the same enterprise. This design speedily broke down owing to the short-sighted timidity of the Bavarian Government, which refused to let its forces leave their own territory; the lack of railway facilities in the Austrian Empire also hampered the moving of two large armies to the northern frontier. Above all, the swift and decisive movements of the Prussians speedily drove the allies to act on the defensive—itself a grave misfortune in war.

Meanwhile the Prussian strategist, von Moltke, was carrying out a far more incisive plan of operations, that of sending three Prussian armies into the middle of Bohemia, and there forming a great mass which would sweep away all obstacles from the road to Vienna. This design received prompt and skilful execution. Saxony was quickly overrun, and the irruption of three great armies into Bohemia compelled the Austrians and their Saxon allies hurriedly to alter their plans. After suffering several reverses in the north of Bohemia, their chief array under Benedek barred

the way of the two northern Prussian arimes on the heights north of the town of Königgrätz. On the morning of July 3rd the defenders long beat off all frontal attacks with heavy loss; but about 2 P.M. the Army of Silesia, under the Crown Prince Frederick of Prussia, after a forced march of twelve miles, threw itself on their right flank, where Benedek expected no very serious onset. After desperate fighting the Army of Silesia carried the village of Chlum in the heart of the Austrian position, and compelled Austrians and Saxons to a hurried retreat over the Elbe. In this the Austrian infantry was saved from destruction by the heroic stand made by the artillery. Even so, the allies lost more than 13,000 killed and wounded, 22,000 prisoners, and 187 guns.[1]

Königgrätz (or Sadowa, as it is often called) decided the whole campaign. The invaders now advanced rapidly towards Vienna, and at the town of Nikolsburg concluded the Preliminaries of Peace with Austria (July 26th), whereupon a mandate came from Paris, bidding them stop. In fact, the Emperor of the French offered his intervention in a manner most threatening to the victors. He sought to detach Italy from the Prussian alliance by the offer of Venetia as a left-handed present from himself—an offer which the Italian Government subsequently refused.

To understand how Napoleon III. came to change front and belie his earlier promises, one must look behind the scenes. Enough is already known to show that the Emperor's hand was forced by his Ministers and by the Parisian Press, probably also by the Empress Eugénie. Though

[1] Sybel, *Die Begründung des deutschen Reiches*, v., pp. 174–205; *Journals of Field Marshal Count von Blumenthal for 1866 and 1871* (Eng. edit.), pp. 37–44.

desirous, apparently, of befriending Prussia, he had already yielded to their persistent pleas urging him to stay the growth of the Protestant Power of North Germany. On June 10th, at the outbreak of the war, he secretly concluded a treaty with Austria, holding out to her the prospect of recovering the great province of Silesia (torn from her by Frederick the Great in 1740) in return for a magnanimous cession of Venetia to Italy. The news of Königgrätz led to a violent outburst of anti-Prussian feeling; but Napoleon refused to take action at once, when it might have been very effective.

The best plan for the French Government would have been to send to the Rhine all the seasoned troops left available by Napoleon III.'s ill-starred Mexican enterprise, so as to help the hard-pressed South German forces, offering also the armed mediation of France to the combatants. In that case Prussia must have drawn back, and Napoleon III. could have dictated his own terms to Central Europe. But his earlier leanings towards Prussia and Italy, the advice of Prince Napoleon ("Plon-Plon") and Lavalette, and the wheedlings of the Prussian ambassador as to compensations which France might gain as a set-off to Prussia's aggrandisement, told on the French Emperor's nature, always some what sluggish and then prostrated by severe internal pain; with the result that he sent his proposals for a settlement of the points in dispute, but took no steps towards enforcing them. A fortnight thus slipped away, during which the Prussians reaped the full fruits of their triumph at Königgrätz; and it was not until July 29th, three days after the preliminaries of peace were signed, that the French Foreign Minister, Drouyn de Lhuys, worried his master, then prostrate with pain at Vichy, into

sanctioning the following demands from victorious Prussia: the cession to France of the Rhenish Palatinate (belonging to Bavaria), the south-western part of Hesse Darmstadt, and that part of Prussia's Rhine-Province lying in the valley of the Saar which she had acquired after Waterloo. This would have brought within the French frontier the great fortress of Mainz (Mayence); but the great mass of these gains, it will be observed, would have been at the expense of South German States, whose cause France proclaimed her earnest desire to uphold against the encroaching power of Prussia.

Bismarck took care to have an official copy of these demands in writing, the use of which will shortly appear; and having procured this precious document, he defied the French envoy, telling him that King William, rather than agree to such a surrender of German land, would make peace with Austria and the German States on any terms, and invade France at the head of the forces of a united Germany. This reply caused another change of front at Napoleon's Court. The demands were disavowed and the Foreign Minister, Drouyn de Lhuys, resigned.[1]

The completeness of Prussia's triumph over Austria and her German allies, together with the preparations of the Hungarians for revolt, decided the Court of Vienna to accept the Prussian terms which were embodied in the Treaty of Prague (August 23rd); they were, the direct cession of Venetia to Italy; the exclusion of Austria from German affairs and her acceptance of the changes there pending; the cession to Prussia of Schleswig-Holstein; and

[1] Sybel, *op. cit.*, v., pp. 365–374. Débidour, *op. cit.*, ii., pp. 315–318. See, too, volume viii. of Ollivier's work, *L'Empire libéral*, published in 1904; and M. de la Gorce's work, *Histoire du second Empire*, vi. (Paris, 1903).

the payment of 20,000,000 thalers (about £3,000,000) as war indemnity. The lenience of these conditions was to have a very noteworthy result, namely, the speedy reconciliation of the two Powers: within twenty years they were firmly united in the Triple Alliance with Italy (see Chapter X.).

Some difficulties stood in the way of peace between Prussia and her late enemies in the German Confederation, especially Bavaria. These last were removed when Bismarck privately disclosed to the Bavarian Foreign Minister the secret demand made by France for the cession of the Bavarian Palatinate. In the month of August, the South German States, Bavaria, Würtemberg, and Baden, accepted Prussia's terms; whereby they paid small war indemnities and recognised the new constitution of Germany. Outwardly they formed a South German Confederation; but this had a very shadowy existence; and the three States by secret treaties with Prussia agreed to place their armies and all military arrangements, in case of war, under the control of the King of Prussia. Thus within a month from the close of "the Seven Weeks' War," the whole of Germany was quietly but firmly bound to common action in military matters; and the actions of France left little doubt as to the need of these timely precaütions.

On those German Satets which stood in the way of Prussia's territorial development and had shown marked hostility, Bismarck bore hard. The Kingdom of Hanover, Electoral Hesse (Hesse-Cassel), the Duchy of Nassau, and the Free City of Frankfurt were annexed outright, Prussia thereby gaining direct contact with her Westphalian and Rhenish Provinces. The absorption of Frankfurt-on-the-Main, and the formation of a new league, the North German

Confederation, swept away all the old federal machinery, and marked out Berlin, not Vienna or Frankfurt, as the future governing centre of the Fatherland. It was doubtless a perception of the vast gains to the national cause which prompted the Prussian Parliament to pass a Bill of Indemnity exonerating the King's Ministers for the illegal acts committed by them during the "conflict time" (1861–66)—acts which saved Prussia in spite of her Parliament.

Constitutional freedom likewise benefited largely by the results of the war. The new North German Confederation was based avowedly on manhood suffrage, not because either King William or Bismarck loved democracy, but because, after lately pledging themselves to it as the groundwork of reform of the old Confederation, they could not draw back in the hour of triumph. As Bismarck afterwards confessed to his Secretary, Dr. Busch, "I accepted universal suffrage, but with reluctance, as a Frankfurt tradition" (*i. e.*, of the democratic Parliament of Frankfurt in 1848).[1] All the lands, therefore, between the Niemen and the Main were bound together in a Confederation based on constitutional principles, though the governing powers of the King and his Ministers continued to be far larger than is the case in Great Britain. To this matter we shall recur when we treat of the German Empire, formed by the union of the North and South German Confederations of 1866.

Austria also was soon compelled to give way before the persistent demands of the Hungarian patriots for their ancient constitution, which happily blended monarchy and democracy. Accordingly, the centralised Hapsburg monarchy was remodelled by the *Ausgleich* (compromise) of

[1] Busch, *Our Chancellor*, ii., p. 196 (English edit.).

1867, and became the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary, the two parts of the realm being ruled quite separately for most purposes of government, and united only for those of army organisation, foreign policy, and finance. Parliamentary control became dominant in each part of the Empire; and the grievances resulting from autocratic or bureaucratic rule vanished from Hungary. They disappeared also from Hanover and Hesse-Cassel, where the Guelf sovereigns and Electors had generally repressed popular movements.

Greatest of all the results of the war of 1866, however, was the gain to the national cause in Germany and Italy. Peoples that had long been divided were now in the brief space of three months brought within sight of the long-wished-for unity. The rush of these events blinded men to their enduring import and produced an impression that the Prussian triumph was like that of Napoleon I., too sudden and brilliant to last. Those who hazarded this verdict forgot that his political arrangements for Europe violated every instinct of national solidarity; while those of 1866 served to group the hitherto divided peoples of North Germany and Italy around the monarchies that had proved to be the only possible rallying points in their respective countries. It was this harmonising of the claims and aspirations of monarchy, nationality, and democracy that gave to the settlement of 1866 its abiding importance, and fitted the two peoples for the crowning triumph of 1870.

CHAPTER I

THE CAUSES OF THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR

"After the fatal year 1866, the Empire was in a state of decadence."—L. GRÉGOIRE, *Histoire de France.*

THE irony of history is nowhere more manifest than in the curious destiny which called a Napoleon III. to the place once occupied by Napoleon I., and at the very time when the national movements, unwittingly called to vigorous life by the great warrior, were attaining to the full strength of manhood. Napoleon III. was in many ways a well-meaning dreamer, who, unluckily for himself, allowed his dreams to encroach on his waking moments. In truth, his sluggish but very persistent mind never saw quite clearly where dreams must give way to realities; or, as M. de Falloux phrased it, "He does not know the difference between dreaming and thinking." [1] Thus his policy showed an odd mixture of generous haziness and belated practicality

Long study of his uncle's policy showed him, rightly enough, that it erred in trampling down the feeling of nationality in Germany and elsewhere. The nephew resolved to avoid this mistake and to pose as the champion of the oppressed and divided peoples of Italy, Germany, Poland, and the Balkan Peninsula—a programme that

[1] *Notes from a Diary*, 1851–72, by Sir M. E. Grant Duff, i., p. 120.

promised to appeal to the ideal aspirations of the French, to embarrass the dynasties that had overthrown the first Napoleon, and to yield substantial gains for his nephew. Certainly it did so in the case of Italy; his championship of the Roumanians also helped on the making of that interesting principality (1861) and gained the good-will of Russia; but he speedily forfeited this by his wholly ineffective efforts on behalf of the Poles in 1863. His great mistakes, however, were committed in and after the year 1863, when he plunged into Mexican politics with the chimerical aim of founding a Roman Catholic Empire in Central America, and favoured the rise of Prussia in connection with the Schleswig-Holstein question. By the former of these he locked up no small part of his army in Mexico when he greatly needed it on the Rhine; by the latter he helped on the rise of the vigorous North German Power.

As we have seen, he secretly advised Prussia to take both Schleswig and Holstein, thereby announcing his wish for the effective union of Germans with the one great State composed almost solely of Germans. "I shall always be consistent in my conduct," he said. "If I have fought for the independence of Italy, if I have lifted up my voice for Polish nationality, I cannot have other sentiments in Germany, or obey other principles." This declaration bespoke the *doctrinaire* rather than the statesman. Untaught by the clamour which French Chauvinists and ardent Catholics had raised against his armed support of the Italian national cause in 1859, he now proposed to further the aggrandisement of the Protestant North German Power which had sought to partition France in 1815.

The clamour aroused by his leanings towards Prussia in

1864–66 was naturally far more violent, in proportion as the interests of France were more closely at stake. Prussia held the Rhine Province; and French patriots, who clung to the doctrine of the "natural frontiers"—the Ocean, Pyrenees, Alps, and Rhine—looked on her as the natural enemy. They pointed out that millions of Frenchmen had shed their blood in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars to win and to keep the Rhine boundary; and their most eloquent spokesman, M. Thiers, who had devoted his historical gifts to glorifying those great days, passionately declaimed against the policy of helping on the growth of the hereditary foe.

We have already seen the results of this strife between the pro-Prussian foibles of the Emperor and the eager prejudices of Frenchmen, whose love of oppressed and divided nations grew in proportion to their distance from France, and changed to suspicion or hatred in the case of her neighbours. In 1866, under the breath of ministerial arguments and oratorical onslaughts Napoleon III.'s policy weakly wavered, thereby giving to Bismarck's statecraft a decisive triumph all along the line. In vain did he in the latter part of that year remind the Prussian statesman of his earlier promises (always discreetly vague) of compensation for France, and throw out diplomatic feelers for Belgium, or at any rate Luxemburg.[1] In vain did M. Thiers declare in the Chamber of Deputies that France, while recognising accomplished facts in Germany,

[1] In 1867 Bismarck's promises went so far as the framing of a secret compact with France, one article of which stated that Prussia would not object to the annexation of Belgium by France. The agreement was first published by the *Times* on July 25, 1870, Bismarck then divulging the secret so as to inflame public opinion against France.

ought "firmly to declare that he will not allow them to go further" (March 14, 1867). Bismarck replied to this challenge of the French orator by publishing five days later the hitherto secret military alliances concluded with the South German States in August, 1866. Thenceforth France knew that a war with Prussia would be a war with united Germany.

In the following year the Zollverein, or German Customs Union (which had been gradually growing since 1833), took a definitely national form in a Customs Parliament which assembled in April, 1868, thus unifying Germany for purposes of trade as well as those of war. This sharp rebuff came at a time when Napoleon's throne was tottering from the utter collapse of his Mexican expedition; when too, he more than ever needed popular support in France for the beginnings of a more constitutional rule. Early in 1867 he sought to buy Luxemburg from Holland. This action aroused a storm of wrath in Prussia, which had the right to garrison Luxemburg; but the question was patched up by a conference of the Powers at London, the Duchy being declared neutral territory under the guarantee of Europe; the fortifications of its capital were also to be demolished, and the Prussian garrison withdrawn. This success for French diplomacy was repeated in Italy, where the French troops supporting the Pope crushed the efforts of Garibaldi and his irregulars to capture Rome, at the sanguinary fight of Mentana (November 3, 1867). The official despatch, stating that the new French rifle, the *chassepôt*, "had done wonders," spread jubilation through France and a sharp anti-Gallic sentiment throughout Italy.

And while Italy heaved with longings for her natural

capital, popular feeling in France and North Germany made steadily for war.

Before entering upon the final stages of the dispute, it may be well to take a bird's-eye view of the condition of the chief Powers in so far as it explains their attitude towards the great struggle.

The condition of French politics was strangely complex. The Emperor had always professed that he was the elect of France, and would ultimately crown his political edifice with the corner-stone of constitutional liberty. Had he done so in the successful years 1855–61, possibly his dynasty might have taken root. He deferred action, however, until the darker years that came after 1866. In 1868 greater freedom was allowed to the Press and in the case of public meetings. The General Election of the spring of 1869 showed large gains to the Opposition, and decided the Emperor to grant to the Corps Législatif the right of initiating laws concurrently with himself, and he declared that Ministers should be responsible to it (September, 1869).

These and a few other changes marked the transition from autocracy to the "Liberal Empire." One of the champions of constitutional principles, M. Emile Ollivier, formed a Cabinet to give effect to the new policy, and the Emperor, deeming the time ripe for consolidating his power on a democratic basis, consulted the country in a *plébiscite*, or mass vote, primarily as to their judgment on the recent changes, but implicitly as to their confidence in the imperial system as a whole. His skill in joining together two topics that were really distinct, gained him a tactical victory. More than 7,350,000 affirmative votes were given, as against 1,572,000 negatives; while 1,900,000

voters registered no vote. This success at the polls emboldened the supporters of the Empire; and very many of them, especially, it is thought, the Empress Eugénie, believed that only one thing remained in order to place the Napoleonic dynasty on a lasting basis; that was a successful war.

Champions of autocracy pointed out that the growth of Radicalism coincided with the period of military failures and diplomatic slights. Let Napoleon III., they said in effect, imitate the policy of his uncle, who, as long as he dazzled France by triumphs, could afford to laugh at the efforts of constitution-mongers. The big towns might prate of liberty; but what France wanted was glory and strong government. Such were their pleas: there was much in the past history of France to support them. The responsible advisers of the Emperor determined to take a stronger tone in foreign affairs, while the out-and-out Bonapartists jealously looked for any signs of official weakness so that they might undermine the Ollivier Ministry and hark back to absolutism. When two great parties in a State make national prestige a catchword of the political game, peace cannot be secure; that was the position of France in the early part of 1870.[1]

The eve of the Franco-German War was a time of great importance for the United Kingdom. The Reform Bill of 1867 gave a great accession of power to the Liberal Party; and the General Election of November, 1868, speedily led to the resignation of the Disraeli Cabinet and the accession of the Gladstone Ministry to power. This portended change in other directions than home affairs. The tradition

[1] See Ollivier's great work, *L'Empire libéral*, for full details of this time.

of a spirited foreign policy died with Lord Palmerston in 1865. With the entry of John Bright to the new Cabinet peace at all costs became the dominant note of British statesmanship. There was much to be said in favour of this. England needed a time of rest in order to cope with the discontent of Ireland and the problems brought about by the growth of democracy and commercialism in the larger island. The disestablishment and partial disendowment of the Protestant Church in Ireland (July, 1869), the Irish Land Act (August, 1870), and the Education Act of 1870, showed the preoccupation of the Ministry for home affairs; while the readiness with which, a little later, they complied with all the wishes of the United States in the *Alabama* case, equally proclaimed their pacific intentions. England, which in 1860 had exercised so powerful an influence on the Italian national question, was for five years a factor of small account in European affairs. Far from pleasing the combatants, our neutrality annoyed both of them. The French accused England of "deserting" Napoleon III. in his time of need—a charge that has lately been revived by M. Hanotaux. To this it is only needful to reply that the French Emperor entered into alliance with us at the time of the Crimean War merely for his own objects, and allowed all friendly feeling to be ended by French threats of an invasion of England in 1858 and his shabby treatment of Italy in the matter of Savoy and Nice a year later. On his side, Bismarck also complained that our feeling for the German cause went no further than "theoretical sympathy," and that "during the war England never compromised herself so far in our favour as to endanger her friendship with France." These vague and enigmatic charges at bottom only express

the annoyance of the combatants at their failure to draw neutrals into the strife.[1]

The traditions of the United States, of course, forbade their intervention in the Franco-Prussian dispute. By an article of their political creed termed the Monroe Doctrine, they asserted their resolve not to interfere in European affairs and to prevent the interference of any strictly European State in those of the New World. It was on this rather vague doctrine that they cried "hands off" from Mexico to the French Emperor; and the abandonment of his *protégé*, the so-called Emperor Maximilian, by French troops, brought about the death of that unhappy prince and a sensible decline in the prestige of his patron (June, 1867).

Russia likewise remembered Napoleon III.'s championship of the Poles in 1863, which, however Platonic in its nature, caused the Czar some embarrassment. Moreover, King William of Prussia had soothed the Czar's feelings, ruffled by the dethroning of three German dynasties in 1866, by a skilful reply which alluded to his (King William's) desire to be of service to Russian interests elsewhere—a hint which the diplomatists of St. Petersburg remembered in 1870 to some effect.

For the rest, the Czar Alexander II. (1855–81) and his Ministers were still absorbed in the internal policy of reform, which in the sixties freed the serfs and gave Russia new judicial and local institutions, doomed to be swept away in the reaction following the murder of that enlightened

[1] Hanotaux, *Contemporary France*, i., p. 9 (Eng. ed.); *Bismarck: his Reflections and Reminiscences*, ii., p. 61. The popular Prussian view about England found expression in the comic paper *Kladderdatsch:*

Deutschland beziehe billige Sympathien
Und Frankreich theures Kriegsmateriel.

ruler. The Russian Government therefore pledged itself to neutrality, but in a sense favourable to Prussia. The Czar ascribed the Crimean War to the ambition of Napoleon III., and remembered the friendship of Prussia at that time, as also in the Polish Revolt of 1863.[1] Bismarck's policy now brought its reward.

The neutrality of Russia is always a matter of the utmost moment for the Central Powers in any war on their western frontiers. Their efforts against revolutionary France in 1792–94 failed chiefly because of the ambiguous attitude of the Czarina Catherine II.; and the collapse of Frederick William IV.'s policy in 1848–51 was due to the hostility of his eastern neighbour. In fact, the removal of anxiety about her open frontier on the east was now worth a quarter of a million of men to Prussia.

But the Czar's neutrality was in one matter distinctly friendly to his uncle, King William of Prussia. It is an open secret that unmistakable hints went from St. Petersburg to Vienna to the effect that, if Austria drew the sword for Napoleon III. she would have to reckon with an irruption of the Russians into her open Galician frontier. Probably this accounts for the conduct of the Hapsburg Power, which otherwise is inexplicable. A war of revenge against Prussia seemed to be the natural step to take. True, the Emperor Francis Joseph had small cause to like Napoleon III. The loss of Lombardy in 1859 still rankled in the breast of every patriotic Austrian; and the suspicions which that enigmatical ruler managed to arouse prevented any definite agreement resulting from the meeting of the two sovereigns at Salzburg in 1867.

[1] See Sir H. Rumbold's *Recollections of a Diplomatist* (First Series), ii., p. 292, for the Czar's hostility to France in 1870.

The relations of France and Austria were still in the same uncertain state before the War of 1870. The foreign policy of Austria was in the hands of Count Beust, a bitter foe of Prussia; but after the concession of constitutional rule to Hungary by the compromise (*Ausgleich*) of 1867, the Dual Monarchy urgently needed rest, especially as its army was undergoing many changes. The Chancellor's action was therefore clogged on all sides. Nevertheless, when the Luxemburg affair of 1867 brought France and Prussia near to war, Napoleon began to make advances to the Court of Vienna. How far they went is not known. Beust has asserted in his correspondence with the French Foreign Minister, the Duc de Gramont (formerly Ambassador at Vienna), that they never were more than discussions, and that they ended in 1869 without any written agreement. The sole understanding was to the effect that the policy of both States should be friendly and pacific, Austria reserving the right to remain neutral if France were compelled to make war. The two Empires further promised not to make any engagement with a third Power without informing the other.

This statement is not very convincing. States do not usually bind themselves in the way just described, unless they have some advantageous agreement with the Power which has the first claim on their alliance. It is noteworthy, however, that the Duc de Gramont, in the correspondence alluded to above, admits that, as Ambassador and as Foreign Minister of France, he never had to claim the support of Austria in the war with Prussia.[1]

How are we to reconcile these statements with the un-

[1] *Memoirs of Count Beust*, ii., pp. 358–359 (Appendix D, Eng. edit.).

doubted fact that the Emperor Napoleon certainly expected help from Austria and also from Italy? The solution of the riddle seems to be that Napoleon, as also Francis Joseph and Victor Emmanuel, kept their Foreign Ministers in the dark on many questions of high policy, which they transacted either by private letters among themselves, or through military men who had their confidence. The French and Italian sovereigns certainly employed these methods, the latter because he was far more French in sympathy than his Ministers.

As far back as the year 1868, Victor Emmanuel made overtures to Napoelon with a view to alliance, the chief aim of which, from his standpoint, was to secure the evacuation of Rome by the French troops, and the gain of the Eternal City for the national cause. Prince Napoleon lent his support to this scheme, and from an article written by him we know that the two sovereigns discussed the matter almost entirely by means of confidential letters.[1] These discussions went on up to the month of June, 1869. Francis Joseph, on hearing of them, urged the French Emperor to satisfy Italy, and thus pave the way for an alliance between the three Powers against Prussia. Nothing definite came of the affair, and chiefly, it would seem, owing to the influence of the Empress Eugénie and the French clerics. She is said to have remarked: "Better the Prussians in Paris than the Italian troops in Rome." The diplomatic situation therefore remained vague, though in the second week of July, 1870, the Emperor again took up the threads which, with greater firmness and foresight, he might have woven into a firm design.

The understanding between the three Powers advanced

[1] *Revue des deux Mondes* for April 1, 1878.

only in regard to military preparations. The Austrian Archduke Albrecht, the victor of Custoza, burned to avenge the defeat of Königgrätz, and with this aim in view visited Paris in February to March, 1870. He then proposed to Napoleon an invasion of North Germany by the armies of France, Austria, and Italy. The French Emperor developed the plan by more specific overtures which he made in the month of June; but his Ministers were so far in the dark as to these military proposals that they were then suggesting the reduction of the French army by ten thousand men, while Ollivier, the Prime Minister, on June 30th declared to the French Chamber that peace had never been better assured.[1]

And yet on that same day General Lebrun, aide-de-camp to the Emperor, was drawing up at Paris a confidential report of the mission with which he lately been entrusted to the Austrian military authorities. From that report we take the following particulars: On arriving at Vienna, he had three private interviews with the Archduke Albrecht, and set before him the desirability of a joint invasion of North Germany in the autumn of that year. To this the Archduke demurred, on the ground that such a campaign ought to begin in the spring if the full fruits of victory were to be gathered in before the short days came. Austria and Italy, he said, could not place adequate forces in the field in less than six weeks owing to lack of railways.[2]

Developing his own views, the Archduke then suggested

[1] Seignobos, *A Political History of Contemporary Europe*, ii., pp. 806–807 (Eng. edit.). Oncken, *Zeitalter des Kaisers Wilhelm* (i., pp. 720–740), tries to prove that there was a deep conspiracy against Prussia. I am not convinced by his evidence.

[2] *Souvenirs militaires*, by General B. L. J. Lebrun (Paris, 1895), pp. 95–148.

that it would be desirable for France to undertake the war against North Germany not later than the middle of March, 1871, Austria and Italy at the same time beginning their mobilisations, though not declaring war until their armies were ready at the end of six weeks. Two French armies should in the meantime cross the Rhine in order to sever the South Germans from the Confederation of the North, one of them marching towards Nuremberg, where it would be joined by the western army of Austria and the Italian forces sent through Tyrol. The other Austrian army would then invade Saxony or Lusatia in order to strike at Berlin. He estimated the forces of the States hostile to Prussia as follows:

	Men.	Horses.	Cannon.
France.....	309,000	35,000	972
Austria (exclusive of reserve).....	360,000	27,000	1,128
Italy.....	68,000	5,000	180
Denmark.....	260,000 (?)	2,000	72

He thus reckoned the forces of the two German Confederations:

	Men.	Horses.	Cannon.
North.....	377,000	48,000	1,284
South.....	97,000	10,000	288

but the support of the latter might be hoped for. Lebrun again urged the desirability of a campaign in the autumn,

but the Archduke repeated that it must begin in the spring. In that condition, as in his earlier statement that France must declare war first, while her allies prepared for war, we may discern a deep-rooted distrust of Napoleon III.

On June 14th the Archduke introduced Lebrun to the Emperor Francis Joseph, who informed him that he wanted peace; but, he added, "if I make war, I must be forced to it." In case of war Prussia might exploit the national German sentiment existing in South Germany and Austria. He concluded with these words: "But if the Emperor Napoleon, compelled to accept or to declare war, came with his armies into South Germany, not as an enemy but as a liberator, I should be forced on my side to declare that I [would] make common cause with him. In the eyes of my people I could do no other than join my armies to those of France. That is what I pray you to say for me to the Emperor Napoleon; I hope that he will see, as I do, my situation both in home and foreign affairs." Such was the report which Lebrun drew up for Napoleon III. on June 30th. It certainly led that sovereign to believe in the probability of Austrian help in the spring of 1871, but not before that time.

The question now arises whether Bismarck was aware of these proposals. If warlike counsels prevailed at Vienna, it is probable that some preparations would be made, and the secret may have leaked out in this way, or possibly through the Hungarian administration. In any case, Bismarck knew that the Austrian Chancellor, Count Beust, thirsted for revenge for the events of 1866.[1] If he heard any whispers of an approaching league against Prussia, he

[1] *Bismarck: his Reflections and Reminiscences*, ii., p. 58.

or he must try his fortunes without the much-coveted help of Austria and Italy. He chose the latter alternative, largely, it would seem, owing to the influence of his vehemently Catholic Empress.[1] After the first defeats he sought to open negotiations, but then it was too late. Prince Napoleon went to Florence and arrived there on August 20th; but his utmost efforts failed to move the Italian Cabinet from neutrality.

Even this brief survey of international relations shows that Napoleon III. was a source of weakness to France. Having seized on power by perfidious means, he throughout his whole reign strove to dazzle the French by a series of adventures, which indeed pleased the Parisians for the time, but at the cost of lasting distrust among the Powers. Generous in his aims, he at first befriended the German and Italian national movements, but forfeited all the fruits of those actions by his pettifogging conduct about Savoy and Nice, the Rhineland and Belgium; while his final efforts to please French Clericals and Chauvinists[2] by supporting the Pope at Rome lost him the support of States that might have retrieved the earlier blunders. In brief, by helping on the Nationalists of North Germany and Italy he offended French public opinion; and his belated and spasmodic efforts to regain popularity at home aroused against him the distrust of all the Powers. Their feelings

[1] For the relations of France to the Vatican, see *Histoire du second Empire*, by M. de la Gorce, vi. (Paris, 1903); also *Histoire Contemporaine* (*i. e.*, of France in 1869–75), by M. Samuel Denis, 4 vols. The Empress Eugénie once said that she was "deux fois Catholique," as a Spaniard and as French Empress. (Sir M. E. Grant Duff, *Notes from a Diary*, 1851–1872, i., p. 125.)

[2] Chauvinist is a term corresponding to our "Jingo." It is derived from a man named Chauvin, who lauded Napoleon I. and French glory to the skies.

about him may be summarised in the *mot* of a diplomatist, "Scratch the Emperor and you will find the political refugee."

How different were the careers of Napoleon III. and of Bismarck! By resolutely keeping before him the national aim, and that only, the Prussian statesman had reduced the tangle of German affairs to simplicity and now made ready for the crowning work of all. In his *Reminiscences* he avows his belief, as early as 1866: "That a war with France would succeed the war with Austria lay in the logic of history"; and again: "I did not doubt that a Franco-German War must take place before the construction of a United Germany could take place." [1] War would doubtless have broken out in 1867 over the Luxemburg question, had he not seen the need of delay for strengthening the bonds of union with South Germany and assuring the increase of the armies of the Fatherland by the adoption of Prussian methods; or, as he phrased it, "each year's postponement of the war would add one hundred thousand trained soldiers to our army." [2] In 1870 little was to be gained by delay. In fact, the unionist movement in Germany then showed ominous signs of slackening. In the South the Parliaments opposed any further approach to union with the North; and the voting of the military budget in the North for that year was likely to lead to strong opposition in the interests of the over-taxed people. A war might solve the unionist problem which was insoluble in time of peace; and a *casus belli* was at hand.

Early in July, 1870, the news leaked out that Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern was the officially accepted candidate

[1] Bismarck, *Reminiscences*, ii., pp. 41, 57 (Eng. edit.).
[2] *Ib.*, p. 58.

for the throne of Spain, left vacant since the revolution which drove Queen Isabella into exile in 1868.[1] At once a thrill of rage shot through France; and the Duc de Gramont, Foreign Minister of the new Ollivier Ministry, gave expression to the prevailing feeling in his answer to a question on the subject in the Chamber of Deputies (July 6th):

"We do not think that respect for the rights of a neighbouring people [Spain] obliges us to allow an alien Power [Prussia], by placing one of its princes on the throne of Charles V., to succeed in upsetting to our disadvantage the present equilibrium of forces in Europe, and imperil the interests and honour of France. We have the firm hope that this eventuality will not be realised. To hinder it, we count both on the wisdom of the German people and on the friendship of the Spanish people. If that should not be so, strong in your support and in that of the nation, we shall know how to fulfil our duty without hesitation and without weakness."[2]

The opening phrases were inaccurate. The prince in question was Prince Leopold of the Swabian and Roman Catholic branch of the Hohenzollern family, who, as the Duc de Gramont knew, could by no possibility recall the days when Charles V. reigned as Emperor in Germany and monarch in Spain. This misstatement showed the intention of the French Ministry to throw down the glove to Prussia—as is also clear from this statement in Gramont's despatch of July 10th to Benedetti: "If the King will not advise the Prince of Hohenzollern to withdraw, well, it is war forthwith, and in a few days we are at the Rhine."[3]

[1] The ex-Queen Isabella died in Paris in April, 1904.

[2] Sorel, *Hist. diplomatique de la Guerre Franco-Allemande*, i., p. 77.

[3] Benedetti, *Ma Mission en Prusse*, p. 34. This work contains the French despatches on the whole affair.

Nevertheless, those who were behind the scenes had just cause for anger against Bismarck. The revelations of Benedetti, French Ambassador at Berlin, as well as the Memoirs of the King of Roumania (brother to Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern) leave no doubt that the candidature of the latter was privately and unofficially mooted in 1868, and again in the spring of 1869 through a Prussian diplomatist, Werthern, and that it met with no encouragement whatever from the Prussian monarch or the Prince himself. But early in 1870 it was renewed in an official manner by the provisional Government of Spain, and (as seems certain) at the instigation of Bismarck, who, in May–June, succeeded in overcoming the reluctance of the Prince and of King William. Bismarck even sought to hurry the matter through the Spanish Cortes so as to commit Spain to the plan; but this failed owing to the misinterpretation of a ciphered telegram from Berlin at Madrid.[1]

Such was the state of the case when the affair became known to the Ollivier Ministry. Though not aware, seemingly, of all these details, Napoleon's advisers were justified in treating the matter, not as a private affair between the Hohenzollerns and Spain (as Germans then maintained it was), but as an attempt of the Prussian Government to place on the Spanish throne a prince who could not but be friendly to the North German Power. In fact, the French saw in it a challenge to war; and, putting together all the facts as now known, we must pronounce that they were almost certainly right. Bismarck undoubtedly wanted

[1] In a recent work, *Kaiser Wilhelm und die Begründung des Reiches*, 1866–1871, Dr. Lorenz tries to absolve Bismarck from complicity in these intrigues, but without success. See *Reminiscences of the King of Roumania* (edited by S. Whitman), pp. 70, 86–87, 92–95; also Headlam's *Bismarck*, p. 327.

war; and it is impossible to think that he did not intend to use this candidature as a means of exasperating the French. The man who afterwards declared that, at the beginning of the Danish disputes in 1863, he made up his mind to have Schleswig-Holstein for Prussia,[1] certainly saw in the Hohenzollern candidature a step towards a Prusso-Spanish alliance or a war with France that might cement German unity.

In any case, that was the outcome of events. The French papers at once declaimed against the candidature in a way that aroused no less passion on the other side of the Rhine. For a brief space, however, matters seemed to be smoothed over by the calm good sense of the Prussian monarch and his nephew. The King was then at Ems, taking the waters, when Benedetti, the French ambassador, waited on him and pressed him most urgently to request Prince Leopold to withdraw from the candidature to the Spanish crown. This the King declined to do in the way that was pointed out to him, rightly considering that such a course would play into the hands of the French by lowering his own dignity and the prestige of Prussia. Moreover, he, rather illogically, held the whole matter to be primarily one that affected the Hohenzollern family and Spain. The young Prince, however, on hearing of the drift of events, solved the problem by declaring his intention not to accept the crown of Spain (July 12th). The action was spontaneous, emanating from Prince Leopold and his father, Prince Antony, not from the Prussian monarch, though, on hearing of their decision, he informed Benedetti that he entirely approved it.

If the French Government had really wished for peace, it

[1] Busch, *Our Chancellor*, i., p. 367.

would have let the matter end there. But it did not do so. The extreme Bonapartists—*plus royalistes que le roi*—all along wished to gain prestige for their sovereign by inflicting an open humiliation on King William and through him on Prussia. They were angry that he had evaded the snare, and now brought Prussia to bear on the Ministry, especially the Duc de Gramont, so that at 7 P.M. of that same day (July 12th) he sent a telegram to Benedetti at Ems directing him to see King William and press him to declare that he "would not again authorise this candidature." The Minister added: "The effervescence of spirits [at Paris] is such that we do not know whether we shall succeed in mastering it." This was true. Paris was almost beside herself. As M. Sorel says: "The warm July evening drove into the streets a populace greedy of shows and excitements, whose imagination was spoiled by the custom of political quackery, for whom war was but a drama and history a romance."[1] Such was the impulse which led to Gramont's new demand, and it was made in spite of the remonstrances of the British ambassador, Lord Lyons.

Viewing that demand in the clearer light of the present time, we must say that it was not unreasonable in itself; but it was presented in so insistent a way that King William declined to entertain it. Again Gramont pressed Benedetti to urge the matter; but the utmost that the King would do was to state: "He gives his approbation entirely and without reserve to the withdrawal of the

[1] Sorel, *Hist. diplomatique de la Guerre Franco-Allemande*, i., chap. iv.; also for the tone of the French press, Giraudeau, *La Vérité sur la Campagne de 1870*, pp. 46–60.

Ollivier tried to persuade Sir M. E. Grant Duff (*Notes from a Diary*, 1873–1881, i., p. 45) that the French demand from King William was quite friendly and natural.

Prince of Hohenzollern: he cannot do more." He refused to see the ambassador further on this subject; but on setting out to return to Berlin—a step necessitated by the growing excitement throughout Germany—he took leave of Benedetti with perfect cordiality (July 14th). The ambassador thereupon returned to Paris.

Meanwhile, however, Bismarck had given the last flick to the restive coursers of the press on both sides of the Rhine. In his *Reminiscences* he has described his depression of spirits on hearing the news of the withdrawal of Prince Leopold's candidature and of his nearly formed resolve to resign as a protest against so tame a retreat before French demands. But while Moltke, Roon, and he were dining together, a telegram reached him from the King at Ems, dated July 13th, 3.50 P.M., which gave him leave to inform the ambassadors and the press of the present state of affairs. Bismarck saw his chance. The telegram could be cut down so as to give a more resolute look to the whole affair. And, after gaining Moltke's assurance that everything was ready for war, he proceeded to condense it. The facts here can only be understood by a comparison of the two versions. We therefore give the original as sent to Bismarck by Abeken, Secretary to the Foreign Office, who was then at Ems:

"His Majesty writes to me: 'Count Benedetti spoke to me on the promenade, in order to demand from me, finally in a very importunate manner, that I should authorise him to telegraph at once that I bound myself for all future time never again to give my consent if the Hohenzollerns should renew their candidature. I refused at last somewhat sternly, as it is neither right nor possible to undertake engagements of this kind *à tout jamais*.

Naturally I told him that I had as yet received no news, and as he was earlier informed about Paris and Madrid than myself, he could see clearly that my Government once more had no hand in the matter.' His Majesty has since received a letter from the Prince. His Majesty, having told Count Benedetti that he was awaiting news from the Prince, has decided, with reference to the above demand, upon the representation of Count Eulenburg and myself, not to receive Count Benedetti again, but only to let him be informed through an aide-de-camp: 'That his Majesty had now received from the Prince confirmation of the news which Benedetti had already received from Paris, and had nothing further to say to the ambassador.' His Majesty leaves it to your Excellency whether Benedetti's fresh demand and its rejection should not be at once communicated both to our ambassadors and to the press."

Bismarck cut this down to the following:

"After the news of the renunciation of the hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern had been officially communicated to the Imperial Government of France by the Royal Government of Spain, the French ambassador at Ems further demanded of his Majesty the King that he would authorise him to telegraph to Paris that his Majesty the King bound himself for all future time never again to give his consent if the Hohenzollerns should renew their candidature. His Majesty the King thereupon decided not to receive the French ambassador again, and sent to tell him through the aide-de-camp on duty that his Majesty had nothing further to communicate to the ambassador."

Efforts have been made to represent Bismarck's "editing" of the Ems telegram as the decisive step leading to war; and in his closing years, when seized with the morbid

desire of a partly discredited statesman to exaggerate his influence on events, he himself sought to perpetuate this version. He claims that the telegram, as it came from Ems, described the incident there "as a fragment of a negotiation still pending, and to be continued at Berlin." This claim is quite untenable. A careful perusal of the original despatch from Ems shows that the negotiation, far from being "still pending," was clearly described as having been closed on that matter. That Benedetti so regarded it is proved by his returning at once to Paris. If it could have been "continued at Berlin," he most certainly would have proceeded thither. Finally, the words in the original as to the King's refusing Benedetti "somewhat sternly" were omitted, and very properly omitted, by Bismarck in his abbreviated version. Had he included those words, he might have claimed to be the final cause of the War of 1870. As it is, his claim must be set aside as the offspring of senile vanity. His version of the original Ems despatch did not contain a single offensive word, neither did it alter any statement. Abeken also admitted that his original telegram was far too long, and that Bismarck was quite justified in abbreviating it as he did.[1]

If we pay attention, not to the present more complete knowledge of the whole affair, but to the imperfect information then open to the German public, war was the

[1] *Heinrich Abeken*, by Hedwig Abeken, p. 375. Bismarck's successor in the Chancellory, Count Caprivi, set matters in their true light in a speech in the Reichstag shortly after the publication of Bismarck's *Reminiscences*.

I dissent from the views expressed by the well-informed reviewer of Ollivier's *L'Empire libéral* (viii.) in the *Times* of May 27, 1904, who pins his faith to an interview of Bismarck with Lord Loftus on July 13, 1870. Bismarck, of course, wanted war; but so did Gramont, and I hold that *the latter* brought it about.

natural result of the second and very urgent demand that came from Paris. The Duc de Gramont in despatching it must have known that he was playing a desperate game. Either Prussia would give way and France would score a diplomatic triumph over a hated rival, or Prussia would fight. The friends of peace in France thought matters hopeless when that demand was sent in so insistent a manner. As soon as Gladstone heard of the second demand of the Ollivier Ministry, he wrote to Lord Granville, then Foreign Minister: "It is our duty to represent the immense responsibility which will rest upon France, if she does not at once accept as satisfactory and conclusive the withdrawal of the candidature of Prince Leopold." [1]

On the other hand, we must note that the conduct of the German press at this crisis was certainly provocative of war. The morning on which Bismarck's telegram appeared in the official *North German Gazette* saw a host of violent articles against France, and gleeful accounts of imaginary insults inflicted by the King on Benedetti. All this was to be expected after the taunts of cowardice freely levelled by the Parisian papers against Prussia for the last two days; but whether Bismarck directly inspired the many sensational versions of the Ems affair that appeared in North German papers on July 14th is not yet proven.

However that may be, the French Government looked on the refusal of its last demand, the publication of Bismarck's telegram, and the insults of the German press as a *casus belli*. The details of the sitting of the Emperor's Council at 10 P.M. on July 14th, at which it was decided to call out the French reserves, are not yet known. Ollivier was not present. There had been a few hours of wavering

[1] J. Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, ii., p. 328.

on this question; but the tone of the Parisian evening papers—it was the French national day—the loud cries of the rabble for war, and their smashing the windows of the Prussian embassy, seem to have convinced the Emperor and his advisers that to draw back now would involve the fall of the dynasty. Report has uniformly pointed to the Empress as pressing these ideas on her consort, and the account which the Duc de Gramont later on gave to Lord Malmesbury of her words at that momentous Council-meeting support a popular rumour. It is as follows:

"Before the final resolve to declare war the Emperor, Empress, and Ministers went to St. Cloud. After some discussion Gramont told me that the Empress, a high-spirited and impressionable woman, made a strong and most excited address, declaring that 'war was inevitable if the honour of France was to be sustained.' She was immediately followed by Marshal Lebœuf, who, in the most violent tone, threw down his portfolio and swore that if war was not declared he would give it up and renounce his military rank. The Emperor gave way, and Gramont went straight to the Chamber to announce the fatal news.[1]

On the morrow (July 15th) the Chamber of Deputies appointed a Commission, which hastily examined the

[1] This version has, I believe, not been refuted. Still, I must look on it with suspicion. No Minister who had done so much to stir up the war-feeling ought to have made any such confession —least of all against a lady, who could not answer it. M. Seignobos, in his *Political History of Contemporary Europe*, i., chap. vi., p. 184 (Eng. edit.), says of Gramont: "He it was who embroiled France in the war with Prussia." In the course of the parliamentary inquiry of 1872 Gramont convicted himself and his Cabinet of folly in 1870 by using these words: "Je crois pouvoir déclarer que si on avait eu un doute, un seule doute, sur notre aptitude à la guerre, on eût immédiatement arrêté la négociation" (*Enquête parlementaire*, I., i., p. 108).

diplomatic documents and reported in a sense favourable to the Ollivier Ministry. The subsequent debate made strongly for a rupture; and it is important to note that Ollivier and Gramont based the demand for warlike preparations on the fact that King William had refused to see the French ambassador, and held that that alone was a sufficient insult. In vain did Thiers protest against the war as inopportune, and demand to see all the necessary documents. The Chamber passed the war supplies by 246 votes to 10; and Thiers had his windows broken. Late on that night Gramont set aside a last attempt of Lord Granville to offer the mediation of England in the cause of peace, on the ground that this would be to the harm of France—"unless means were found to stop the rapid mobilisation of the Prussian armies which were approaching our frontier."[1] In this connection it is needful to state that the order for mobilising the North German troops was not given by the King of Prussia until late on July 15th, when the war votes of the French Chambers were known at Berlin.

Benedetti, in his review of the whole question, passes the following very noteworthy and sensible verdict: "It was public opinion which forced the [French] Government to draw the sword, and by an irresistible onset dictated its resolutions."[2] This is certainly true for the public opinion of Paris, though not of France as a whole. The rural districts, which form the real strength of France, nearly always cling to peace. It is significant that the Prefects of French Departments reported that only sixteen declared in favour of war, while thirty-seven were in doubt on the matter, and thirty-four accepted war with regret. This is

[1] Quoted by Sorel, *op. cit.*, i., 196.
[2] Benedetti, *Ma Mission en Prusse*, p. 411.

what might be expected from a people which in the Provinces is marked by prudence and thrift.

In truth, the people of modern Europe have settled down to a life of peaceful industry, in which war is the most hateful of evils. On the other hand, the massing of mankind in great cities, where thought is superficial and feelings can quickly be stirred by a sensation-mongering press, has undoubtedly helped to feed political passions and national hatred. A rural population is not deeply stirred by stories of slights to ambassadors. The peasant of Brittany had no active dislike for the peasant of Brandenburg. Each only asked to be left to till his fields in peace and safety. But the crowds on the Parisian boulevards and in *Unter den Linden* took (and seemingly always will take) a very different view of life. To them the news of the humiliation of the rival beyond the Rhine was the greatest and therefore the most welcome of sensations; and, unfortunately, the papers which pandered to their taste set the tone of thought for no small part of France and Germany, and exerted on national policy an influence out of all proportion to its real weight.

The story of the Franco-German dispute is one of national jealousy, carefully fanned for four years by newspaper editors and popular speakers until a spark sufficed to set Western Europe in a blaze. The spark was the Hohenzollern candidature, which would have fallen harmless had not the tinder been prepared since Königgrätz by journalists at Paris and Berlin. The resulting conflagration may justly be described as due partly to national friction and partly to the supposed interests of the Napoleonic dynasty, but also to the heat engendered by a sensational press.

It is well that one of the chief dangers to the peace of the

modern world should be clearly recognised. The centralisation of governments and of population may have its advantages; but over against them we must set grave drawbacks; among those of a political kind the worst are the growth of nervousness and excitability, and the craving for sensation—qualities which undoubtedly tend to embitter national jealousies at all times, and in the last case to drive weak dynasties or cabinets on to war. Certainly Bismarck's clever shifts to bring about a rupture in 1870 would have failed had not the atmosphere both at Paris and Berlin been charged with electricity.[1]

[1] Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern died at Berlin on June 8, 1905. He was born in 1835 and in 1861 married the Infanta of Portugal.

CHAPTER II

FROM WÖRTH TO GRAVELOTTE

"The Chief of the General Staff had his eye fixed from the first upon the capture of the enemy's capital, the possession of which is of more importance in France than in other countries. . . . It is a delusion to believe that a plan of war may be laid for a prolonged period and carried out in every point."—VON MOLTKE, *The Franco-German War.*

IN olden times, before the invention of long-range arms of precision, warfare was decided mainly by individual bravery and strength. In the modern world victory has inclined more and more to that side which carefully prepares beforehand to throw a force, superior alike in armament and numbers, against the vitals of its enemy. Assuming that the combatants are fairly equal in physical qualities—and the spread of liberty has undoubtedly lessened the great differences that once were observable in this respect among European peoples—war becomes largely an affair of preliminary organisation. That is to say, it is now a matter of brain rather than muscle. Writers of the school of Carlyle may protest that all modern warfare is tame when compared with the splendidly rampant animalism of the Homeric fights. In the interests of humanity it is to be hoped that the change will go on until war becomes wholly scientific and utterly unattractive. Meanwhile, the soldier-caste, the politician, and the tax-payer have to face the fact that the fortunes of war are very

largely decided by humdrum costly preparations in time of peace.

The last chapter set forth the causes that led to war in 1870. That event found Germany fully prepared. The lessons of the campaign of 1866 had not been lost upon the Prussian General Staff. The artillery was improved alike in *matériel* and in drill tactics, Napoleon I.'s plan of bringing massed batteries to bear on decisive points being developed with Prussian thoroughness. The cavalry learnt to scout effectively and act as "the eyes and ears of an army," as well as to charge in brigades on a wavering foe. Universal military service had been compulsory in Prussia since 1813; but the organisation of territorial army corps now received fuller development, so that each part of Prussia, including, too, most of the North German Confederation, had its own small army complete in all arms, and reinforced from the reserve, and, at need, from the *Landwehrr*.[1] By virtue of the military conventions of 1866, the other German States adopted a similar system, save that while Prussians served for three years (with few exceptions in the case of successful examinees), the South Germans served with the colours for a shorter period. Those conventions also secured uniformity, or harmony, in the railway arrangements for the transport of troops.

The general staff of the North German army had used these advantages to the utmost, by preparing a most complete plan of mobilisation, so complete, in fact, that the

[1] By the Prussian law of November 9, 1867, soldiers had to serve three years with the colours, four in the reserve, and five in the *Landwehr*. Three new army corps (9th, 10th, and 11th) were formed in the newly annexed or confederated lands—Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, Saxony, etc. (Maurice, *The Franco-German War*, 1900).

myriad orders had only to be drawn from their pigeon-holes and dated in the last hours of July 15th. Forthwith the whole of the vast machinery started in swift but smooth working. Reservists speedily appeared at their regimental depôts, there found their equipment, and speedily brought their regiments up to the war footing; trains were ready, timed according to an elaborate plan, to carry them Rhinewards; provisions and stores were sent forward, *ohne Hast, ohne Rast*, as the Germans say; and so perfect were the plans on rail, river, and road that none of those blocks occurred which frequently upset the plans of the French. Thus, by dint of plodding preparation, a group of federal States gained a decisive advantage over a centralised Empire which left too many things to be arranged in the last few hours.

Herein lies the true significance of the War of 1870. All Governments that were not content to jog along in the old military ruts saw the need of careful organisation, including the eventual control of all needful means of transport; and all that were wise hastened to adapt their system to the new order of things, which aimed at assuring the swift, orderly movement of great masses of men by all the resources of mechanical science. Most of the civilised States soon responded to the new needs of the age; but a few (among them Great Britain) were content to make one or two superficial changes and slightly increase the number of troops, while leaving the all-important matter of organisation almost untouched; and that, too, despite the vivid contrast which every one could see between the machine-like regularity of the German mobilisation and the chaos that reigned on the French side.

Outwardly, the French army appeared to be beyond the

reach of criticism. The troops had in large measure seen active service in the various wars whereby Napoleon III. fulfilled his promise of 1852—"The Empire is peace"; and their successes in the Crimea, Lombardy, Syria, and China, everywhere, in fact, but Mexico, filled them with warlike pride. Armed with the *chassepôt*, a newer and better rifle than the needle-gun, while their artillery (admittedly rather weak) was strengthened by the *mitrailleuse*, they claimed to be the best in the world, and burned to measure swords with the upstart forces of Prussia.

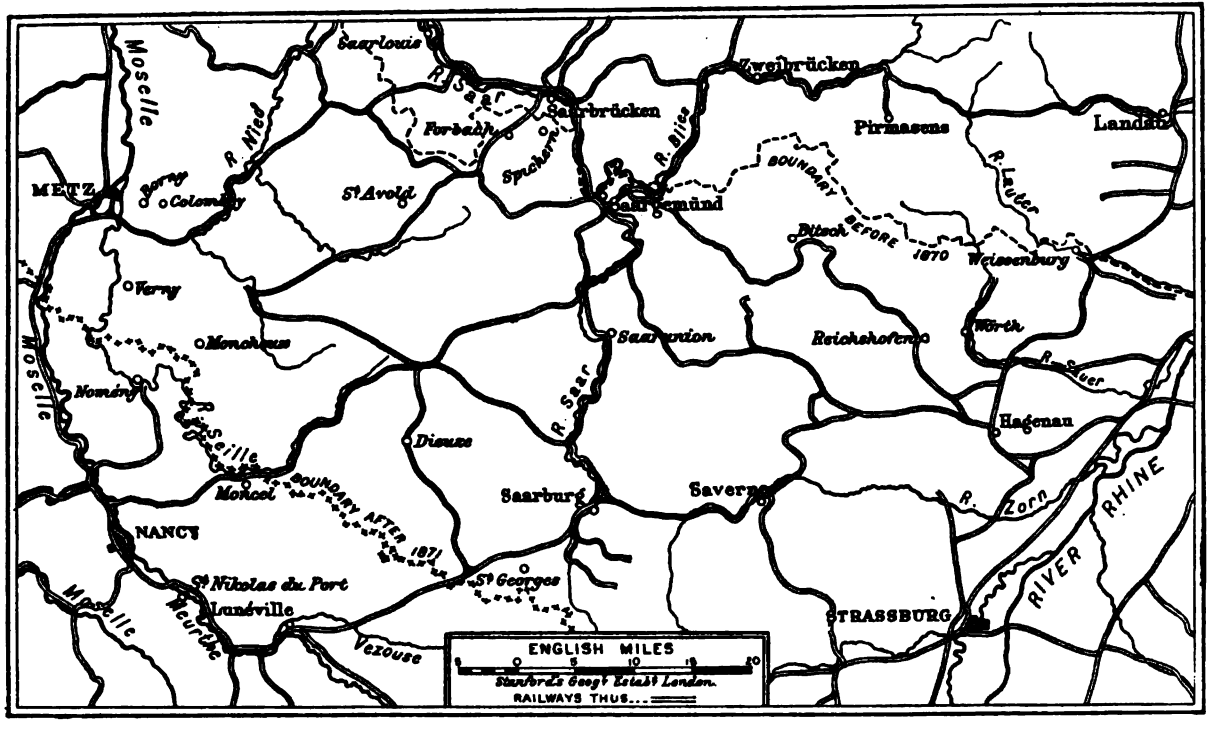
But there was a sombre reverse to this bright side. All thinking Frenchmen, including the Emperor, were aware of grave defects—the lack of training of the officers,[1] and the want of adaptability in the general staff, which had little of that practical knowledge that the German staff secured by periods of service with the troops. Add to this the leaven of republicanism working strongly in the army as in the State, and producing distrust between officers and men; above all, the lack of men and materials; and the outlook was not reassuring to those who knew the whole truth. Inclusive of the levies of the year 1869, which were not quite ready for active service, France would have by August 1, 1870, as many as 567,000 men in her regular army; but, of these, colonial, garrison, and other duties claimed as many as 230,000, a figure which seems designed to include the troops that existed only on paper. Not only the *personnel* but the *matériel* came far below what

[1] M. de la Gorce, in his *Histoire du Second Empire*, vi., tells how the French officers scouted study of the art of war, while most of them looked on favouritism as the only means of promotion. The warnings of Colonel Stoffel, French Military Attaché at Berlin, were passed over as those of "a Prussomane, whom Bismarck had fascinated."

was expected. General Lebœuf, the War Minister, ventured to declare that all was ready, even to the last button on the gaiters; but his boast at once rang false when at scores of military depôts neither gaiters, boots, nor uniforms were ready for the reservists who needed them.

Even where the organisation worked at its best, that best was slow and confused. There were no territorial army corps in time of peace; and the lack of this organisation led to a grievous waste of time and energy. Regiments were frequently far away from the depôts which contained the reservists' equipment; and when these had found their equipment, they often wandered widely before finding their regiments on the way to the frontier. One general officer hunted about on the frontier for a command which did not exist. As a result of this lack of organisation, and of that control over the railways which the Germans had methodically enforced, France lost the many advantages which her compact territory and excellent railway system ought to have ensured over her more straggling and poorer rival.

The loss of time was as fatal as it was singular under the rule of a Napoleon whose uncle had so often shattered his foes by swift movements of troops. In 1870 Napoleonic France had nothing but speed and dash on which to count. Numbers were against her. In 1869 Marshal Lebœuf had done away with the Garde Mobile, a sort of militia which had involved only fifteen days' drill in the year; and the Garde Nationale of the towns was less fit for campaigning than the re-formed Mobiles proved to be later on in the war. Thus France had no reserves: everything rested on the 330,000 men struggling towards the frontiers. It is doubtful whether there were more than 220,000 men in the


Moselle
Saarlouis
R. Saar
Zweibrücken
Saarbrücken
Forbach
Sprakel
R. Blies
Pirmasens
Landau
R. Mied
METZ
Borny
Colombey
St Avold
Saargemünd
BOUNDARY BEFORE 1870
Bitsch
R. Lauter
Weissenburg
Verny
Monchoux
Saarunion
Reichshoffen
Wörth
R. Sauer
Moselle
Nomény
R. Seille
Dieuze
R. Saar
Hagenau
Moncel
BOUNDARY AFTER 1871
Saarburg
Saverne
R. Zorn
RHINE
RIVER
NANCY
St Nicolas du Port
St Georges
Moselle
Meurthe
Lunéville
Vezouse
STRASSBURG
ENGLISH MILES
0 5 10 15 20
Stanford's Geog! Estab! London.
RAILWAYS THUS...

first line by August 6th, with some 50,000 more in reserve at Metz, etc.

Against them Germany could at once put into the field 460,000 infantry, 56,000 cavalry, with 1,584 cannon; and she could raise these forces to some 1,180,000 men by calling out all the reserves and the *Landwehr*. These last were men who had served their time and had not, as a rule, lost their soldierly qualities in civil life. Nearly 400,000 highly trained troops were ready to invade France early in August.

In view of these facts it seems incredible that Ollivier, the French Prime Minister, could have publicly stated that he entered on war with a light heart. Doubtless Ministers counted on help from Austria or Italy, perhaps from both; but, as it proved, they judged too hastily. As was stated in Chapter I. of this work, Austria was not likely to move so long as Russia favoured the cause of Prussia; for any threatening pressure of the Muscovites on the open flank of the Hapsburg States, Galicia, has sufficed to keep them from embarking on a campaign in the West. In this case, the statesmen of Vienna are said to have known by July 20th that Russia would quietly help Prussia; she informed the Hapsburg Government that any increase in its armaments would be met by a corresponding increase in those of Russia. The meaning of such a hint was clear; and Austria decided not to seek revenge for Königgrätz unless the French triumph proved to be overwhelming. As for Italy, her alliance with France alone was very improbable, for the reasons previously stated.

Another will-o'-the-wisp which flitted before the ardent Bonapartists who pushed on the Emperor to war was that the South German States would forsake the North and

range their troops under the French eagles, as they had done in the years 1805–12. The first plan of campaign drawn up at Paris aimed at driving a solid wedge of French troops between the two Confederations and inducing or compelling the South to join France; it was hoped that Saxony would follow. As a matter of fact, very many of the South Germans and Saxons disliked Prussian supremacy; Catholic Bavaria looked askance at the growing power of Protestant Prussia. Würtemberg was Protestant, but far too democratic to wish for the control of the cast-iron bureaucrats of Berlin. The same was even more true of Saxony, where hostility to Prussia was a deep-rooted tradition; some of the Saxon troops on leaving their towns even shouted, "Napoleon soll leben!"[1] It is therefore quite possible that, had France struck quickly at the valleys of the Neckar and Main, she might have reduced the South German States to neutrality. Alliance perhaps was out of the question save under overwhelming compulsion; for France had alienated the Bavarian and Hessian Governments by her claims in 1866, and the South German people by her recent offensive treatment of the Hohenzollern candidature. It is, however, safe to assert that if Napoleon I. had ordered French affairs he would have swept the South Germans into his net a month after the outbreak of war, as he had done in 1805. But nature had not bestowed warlike gifts on the nephew, who took command of the French army at Metz at the close of July, 1870. His feeble health, alternating with periods of severe pain, took from him all that buoyancy which lends life to an army and vigour to the headquarters; and his chief of

[1] *I. e.*, "Long live Napoleon!" The author had this from an Englishman who was then living in Saxony.

staff, Leboeuf, did not make good the lack of these qualities in the nominal chief.

All the initiative and vigour were on the east of the Rhine. The spread of the national principle to Central and South Germany had recently met with several checks; but the diplomatic blunders of the French Government, the threats of their press that the Napoleonic troops would repeat the wonders of 1805; above all, admiration of the dignified conduct of King William under what were thought to be gratuitous insults from France, began to kindle the flame of German patriotism even in the particularists of the South. The news that the deservedly popular Crown Prince of Prussia, Frederick William, would command the army now mustering in the Palatinate, largely composed of South Germans, sent a thrill of joy through those States. Taught by the folly of her stay-at-home strategy in 1866, Bavaria readily sent her large contingent beyond the Rhine; and all danger of a French irruption into South Germany was ended by the speedy massing of the Third German army, some 200,000 strong in all, on the north of Alsace. For the French to cross the Rhine at Speyer, or even at Kehl, in front of a greatly superior army (though as yet they knew not its actual strength) was clearly impossible; and in the closing hours of July the French headquarters fell back on other plans, which, speaking generally, were to defend the French frontier from the Moselle to the Rhine by striking at the advanced German troops. At least, that seems to be the most natural explanation of the sudden and rather flurried changes then made.

It was wise to hide this change to a strategic defensive by assuming a tactical offensive; and on August 2nd two divisions of Frossard's corps attacked and drove back the

advanced troops of the Second German army from Saarbrücken. The affair was unimportant: it could lead to nothing, unless the French had the means of following up the success. This they had not; and the advance of the First and Second German armies, commanded by General Steinmetz and Prince Frederick Charles, was soon to deprive them of this position.

Meanwhile the Germans were making ready a weightier enterprise. The muster of the huge Third army to the north of Alsace enabled their general staff to fix August 4th for a general advance against that frontier. It fell to this army, under the Crown Prince of Prussia, Frederick William, to strike the first great blow. Early on August 4th a strong Bavarian division advanced against the small fortified town of Weissenburg, which lies deep down in the valley of the Lauter, surrounded by lofty hills. There it surprised a weak French division, the vanguard of MacMahon's army, commanded by General Abel Douay, whose scouts had found no trace of the advancing enemy. About 10 A.M. Douay fell, mortally wounded; another German division, working round the town to the east, carried the strong position of the Geisberg; and these combined efforts, frontal and on the flank, forced the French hastily to retreat westwards over the hills to Wörth, after losing more than two thousand men.

The news of this reverse and of the large German forces ready to pour into the north of Alsace led the Emperor to order the 7th French corps at Belfort, and the 5th in and around Bitsch, to send reinforcements to MacMahon, whose main force held the steep and wooded hills between the villages of Wörth, Fröschweiler, and Reichshofen. The line of railway between Strassburg and Bitsch touches

Reichshofen; but, for some reason that has never been satisfactorily explained, MacMahon was able to draw up only one division from the side of Strassburg and Belfort, and not one from Bitsch, which was within an easy march. The fact seems to be that de Failly, in command at Bitsch, was a prey to conflicting orders from Metz, and therefore failed to bring up the 5th corps as he should have done. MacMahon's cavalry was also very defective in scouting, and he knew nothing as to the strength of the forces rapidly drawing near from Weissenburg and the east.

Certainly his position at Wörth was very strong. The French lines were ranged along the steep wooded slope running north and south, with buttress-like projections, intersected by gullies, the whole leading up to a plateau on which stand the village of Fröschweiler and the hamlet of Elsasshausen. Behind is the wood called the Grosser Wald, while the hamlet is flanked on the south and in front by an outlying wood, the Niederwald. Behind the Grosser Wald the ground sinks away to the valley in which runs the Bitsch-Reichshofen railway. In front of MacMahon's position lay the village of Wörth, deep in the valley of the Sauerbach. The invader would therefore have to carry this village, or cross the stream and press up the long, open slopes on which were ranged the French troops and batteries, with all the advantages of cover and elevation on their side. A poor general, having forces smaller than those of his enemy, might hope to hold such a position. But there was one great defect. Owing to de Failly's absence MacMahon had not enough men to hold the whole of the position marked out by nature for defence.

Conscious of its strength, the Prussian Crown Prince ordered the leaders of his vanguard not to bring on a

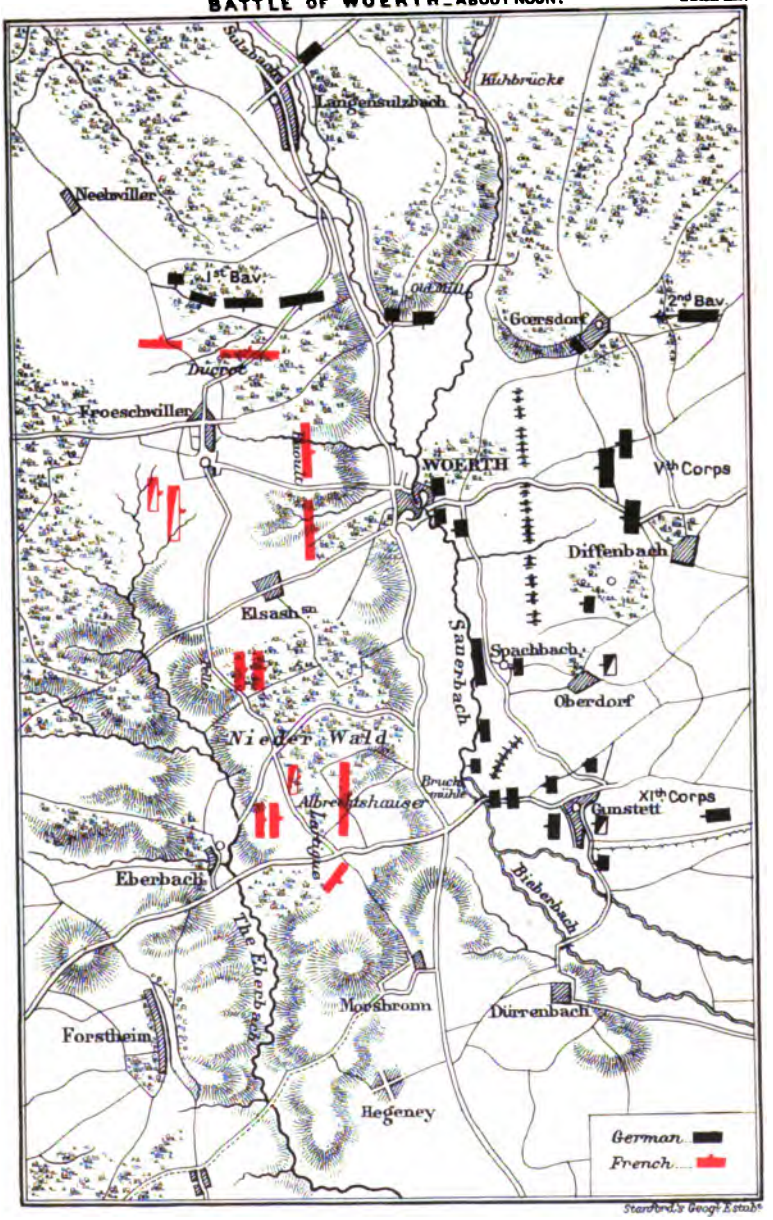
general engagement on August 6th, when the invading army had not at hand its full striking strength.[1] But orders failed to hold in the ardour of the Germans under the attacks of the French. Affairs of outposts along the Sauerbach early on that morning brought on a serious fight, which up to noon went against the invaders. At that time the Crown Prince galloped to the front, and ordered an attack with all available forces. The fighting, hitherto fierce but spasmodic between division and division, was now fed by a steady stream of German reinforcements, until 87,000 of the invaders sought to wrest from Mac-Mahon the heights, with their woods and villages, which he had but 54,000 to defend. The superiority of numbers soon made itself felt. Pursuant to the Crown Prince's orders, parts of two Bavarian corps began to work their way (but with one strangely long interval of inaction) through the wood to the north of the French left wing; on the Prussian 11th corps fell the severer task of winning their way up the slopes south of Wörth, and thence up to the Niederwald and Elsasshausen. When these woods were won, the 5th corps was to make its frontal attack from Wörth against Fröschweiler. Despite the desperate efforts of the French and their Turco regiments, and a splendid but hopeless charge of two regiments of Cuirassiers and one of Lancers against the German infantry, the Niederwald and Elsasshausen were won; and about four o'clock the sustained fire of fifteen German batteries against Frösch-weiler enabled the 5th corps to struggle up that deadly glacis in spite of desperate charges by the defenders.

[1] See von Blumenthal's *Journals*, p. 87 (Eng. edit.): "The battle which I had expected to take place on the 7th, and for which I had prepared a good scheme for turning the enemy's right flank, came on of itself to-day."

Throughout the day the French showed their usual dash and devotion, some regiments being cut to pieces rather than retire. But by five o'clock the defence was outflanked on the two wings and crushed at the centre; human nature could stand no more after eight hours' fighting; and after a final despairing effort of the French Cuirassiers all their line gave way in a general rout down the slopes to Reichshofen and towards Saverne. Apart from the Würtembergers held in reserve, few of the Germans were in a condition to press the pursuit. Nevertheless the fruits of victory were very great: ten thousand Frenchmen lay dead or wounded; six thousand unwounded prisoners were taken, with twenty-eight cannon and five *mitrailleuses*. Above all, MacMahon's fine army was utterly broken, and made no attempt to defend any of the positions on the north of the Vosges. Not even a tunnel was there blown up to delay the advance of the Germans. Hastily gathering up the 5th corps from Bitsch,—the corps which ought to have been at Wörth,—that gallant but unfortunate general struck out to the south-west for the great camp at Châlons. The triumph, however, cost the Germans dear. As many as 10,600 men were killed or wounded, the 5th Prussian corps alone losing more than half that number. Their cavalry failed to keep touch with the retreating French.

On that same day (August 6th) a disaster scarcely less serious overtook the French 2nd corps, which had been holding Saarbrücken. Convinced that that post was too advanced and too weak in presence of the foremost divisions of the First and Second German armies now advancing rapidly against it, General Frossard drew back his vanguard some mile and a half to the line of steep hills

BATTLE OF WOERTH - ABOUT NOON. Plan III.



G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York.

between Spicheren and Forbach, just within the French frontier. This retreat, as it seemed, tempted General Kameke to attack with a single division, as he was justified in doing in order to find the direction and strength of the retiring force. The attack, when pushed home, showed that the French were bent on making a stand on their commanding heights; and an onset on the Rothe Berg was stoutly beaten off about noon.

But now the speedy advance and intelligent co-operation of other German columns was instrumental in turning an inconsiderable repulse into an important victory. General Göben was not far off, and, marching towards the firing, sent to offer his help with the 8th corps. General von Alvensleben, also, with the 3rd corps had reached Neunkirchen when the sound of firing near Saarbrücken led him to push on for that place with the utmost speed. He entrained part of his corps and brought it up in time to strengthen the attack on the Rothe Berg and other heights nearer to Forbach. Each battalion as it arrived was hurled forward, and General von François, charging with his regiment, gained a lodgment half-way up the broken slope of the Rothe Berg, which was stoutly maintained even when he fell mortally wounded. Elsewhere the onsets were repelled by the French, who, despite their smaller numbers, kept up a sturdy resistance on the line of hills in the woods behind, and in the iron-works in front of Forbach. Even when the Germans carried the top of the Rothe Berg, their ranks were riddled by a cross-fire; but by incredible exertions they managed to bring guns to the summit and retaliate with effect.[1]

[1] For these details about the fighting at the Rothe Berg I am largely indebted to my friend Mr. Bernard Pares, M.A., who has

This, together with the outflanking movement which their increasing numbers enabled them to carry out against the French left wing at Forbach, decided the day, and Frossard's corps fell back, shattered, towards the corps of Bazaine. It is noteworthy that this was but nine or ten miles to the rear. Bazaine had ordered three divisions to march toward the firing: one made for a wrong point and returned; the others made half-hearted efforts, and thus left Frossard to be overborne by numbers. The result of these disjointed movements was that both Frossard and Bazaine hurriedly retired towards Metz, while the First and Second German armies now gathered up all their strength with the aim of shutting up the French in that fortress. To this end the First army made for Colombey, east of Metz, while the leading part of the Second army purposed to cross the Moselle south of Metz and circle round that stronghold on the west.

It is now time to turn to the French headquarters. These two crushing defeats on a single day utterly dashed Napoleon's plan of a spirited defence of the north-east frontier until such time as the levies of 1869 should be ready, or Austria and Italy should draw the sword. On July 26th the Austrian ambassador assured the French Ministry that Austria was pushing on her preparations. Victor Emmanuel was with difficulty restrained by his ministers from openly taking the side of France. On the night of August 6th he received telegraphic news of the battles of Wörth and Forbach, whereupon he exclaimed, "Poor Emperor! I pity him, but I have had a lucky escape." Austria also drew back, and thus left France

made a careful study of the ground there, as also at Wörth and Sedan.

face to face with the naked truth that she stood alone and unready before a united and triumphant Germany, able to pour treble her own forces through the open portals of Lorraine and Northern Alsace.

Napoleon III., to do him justice, had never cherished the wild dreams that haunted the minds of his consort and of the frothy "mamelukes" lately in favour at Court; still less did the "silent man of destiny" indulge in the idle boasts that had helped to alienate the sympathy of Europe and to weld together Germany to withstand the blows of a second Napoleonic invasion. The nephew knew full well that he was not the Great Napoleon—he knew it before Victor Hugo in spiteful verse vainly sought to dub him the Little. True, his statesmanship proved to be mere dreamy philosophising about nationalities; his administrative powers, small at the best, were ever clogged by his too generous desire to reward his fellow-conspirators of the *coup d'état* of 1851; and his gifts for war were scarcely greater than those of the other *Napoléonides*, Joseph and Jerome. Nevertheless the reverses of his early life had strengthened that fund of quiet stoicism, that energy to resist if not to dare, which formed the backbone of an otherwise somewhat weak, shadowy, and uninspiring character. And now, in the rapid fall of his fortunes, the greatest adventurer of the nineteenth century showed to the full those qualities of toughness and dignified reserve which for twenty years had puzzled and imposed on that lively, emotional people. By the side of the downcast braggarts of the Court and the unstrung screamers of the Parisian press, his mien had something of the heroic. *Tout peut se rétablir*,—"All may yet be set right,"—such was the vague but dignified phrase in which he summarised the results of August 6th to his people.

The military situation now required a prompt retirement beyond the Moselle. The southerly line of retreat which MacMahon and de Failly had been driven to take forbade the hope of their junction with the main army at Metz in time to oppose a united front to the enemy. And it was soon known that their flight could not be stayed at Nancy or even at Toul. During the agony of suspense as to their movements and those of their German pursuers, the Emperor daily changed his plans. First, he and Lebœuf planned a retreat beyond the Moselle and Meuse; next, political considerations bade them stand firm on the banks of the Nied, some twelve miles east of Metz; and, when this position seemed unsafe, they ended the marchings and counter-marchings of their troops by taking up a position at Colombey, nearer to Metz.

Meanwhile at Paris the Chamber of Deputies had overthrown the Ollivier Ministry, and the Empress Regent installed in office Count Palikao. There was a general outcry against Lebœuf, and on the 12th the Emperor resigned the command to Marshal Bazaine (Lebrun now acting as chief of staff), with the injunction to retreat to Verdun. For the Emperor to order such a retreat in his own name was thought to be inopportune. Bazaine was a convenient scapegoat, and he himself knew it. Had he thrown an army corps into Metz and obeyed the Emperor's orders by retreating on Verdun, things would certainly have gone better than was now to be the case. In his printed defence Bazaine has urged that the army had not enough provisions for the march, and, further, that the outlying forts of Metz were not yet ready to withstand a siege—a circumstance which, if true, partly explains Bazaine's reluctance to leave

the "virgin city." [1] Napoleon III. quitted it early on the 16th: he and his escort were the last Frenchmen to get free of that death-trap for many a week.

While Metz exercised this fatal fascination over the protecting army, the First and Second German armies were striding westwards to envelop both the city and its guardians. Moltke's aim was to hold many of the French in the neighbourbood of the fortress, while his left wing swung round it on the south. The result was the battle of Colombey on the east of Metz (August 14th). It was a stubborn fight, costing the Germans some five thousand men, while the French with smaller losses finally withdrew under the eastern walls of Metz. But that heavy loss meant a great ultimate gain to Germany. The vacillations of Bazaine, whose strategy was far more faulty than that of Napoleon III. had been, together with the delay caused by the defiling of a great part of the army through the narrow streets of Metz, gave the Germans an opportunity such as had not occurred since the year 1805, when Napoleon I. shut up an Austrian army in Ulm.

The man who now saw the splendid chance of which Fortune vouchsafed a glimpse, was Lieutenant-General von Alvensleben, commander of the 3rd corps, whose activity and resource had so largely contributed to the victory of Spicheren-Forbach. Though the orders of his Commander-in-Chief, Prince Frederick Charles, forbade an advance until the situation in front was more fully known, the General heard enough to convince himself that a rapid

[1] Bazaine gave this excuse in his *Rapport sommaire sur les Opérations de l'Armée du Rhin;* but as a staff officer pointed out in his incisive *Reponse*, this reason must have been equally cogent when Napoleon (August 12th) ordered him to retreat; and he was still bound to obey the Emperor's orders.

advance southwards to and over the Moselle might enable him to intercept the French retreat on Verdun, which might now be looked on as certain. Reporting his conviction to his chief, as also to the royal headquarters, he struck out with all speed on the 15th, quietly threw a bridge over the river, and sent on his advanced guard as far as Pagny near Gorze, while all his corps, about 33,000 strong, crossed the river about midnight. Soon after dawn, he pushed on towards Gorze, knowing by this time that the other corps of the Second army were following him, while the 7th and 8th corps of the First army were about to cross the river nearly opposite that town.

This bold movement, which would have drawn on him sharp censure in case of overthrow, was more than justifiable seeing the discouraged state of the French troops, the supreme need of finding their line of retreat, and the splendid results that must follow on the interception of that retreat. The operations of war must always be attended with risk, and the great commander is he whose knowledge of the principles of strategy enables him quickly to see when the final gain warrants the running of risks and how they may be met with the least likelihood of disaster.

Alvensleben's advance was in accordance with Moltke's general plan of operations; but that corps leader, finding the French to be in force between him and Metz, determined to attack them in order to delay their retreat. The result was the battle of August 16th, variously known as Vionville, Rezonville, or Mars-la-Tour—a battle that defies brief description, inasmuch as it represented the effort of the 3rd, or Brandenburg, corps, with little help at first from others, to hold its ground against the onsets of

two French corps. Early in the fight Bazaine galloped up, but he did not bring forward the masses in his rear, probably because he feared to be cut off from Metz. Even so, all through the forenoon, it seemed that the gathering forces of the French must break through the thin lines audaciously thrust into that almost open plain on the flank of their line of march. But Alvensleben and his men held their ground with a dogged will that nothing could shatter. In one sense their audacity saved them. Bazaine for a long time could not believe that a single corps would throw itself against one of the two roads by which his great army was about to retreat. He believed that the northern road might also be in danger, and therefore did not launch at Alvensleben the solid masses that must have swept him back towards the Meuse. At noon four battalions of the German 10th corps struggled up from the south and took their share of the hitherto unequal fight.

But the crisis of the fight came a little later. It was marked by one of the most daring and effective strokes ever dealt in modern warfare. At two o'clock, when the advance of Canrobert's 6th corps towards Vionville threatened to sweep away the wearied Brandenburgers, six squadrons of the 7th regiment of Cuirassiers with a few Uhlans flung themselves on the new lines of foemen, not to overpower them—that was impossible—but to delay their advance and weaken their impact. Only half of the brave horsemen returned from that ride of death, but they gained their end.

The mad charge drove deep into the French array about Rezonville, and gave their leaders pause in the belief that it was but the first of a series of systematic attacks on

the French left. System rather than dash was supposed to characterise German tactics; and the daring of their enemies for once made the French too methodical. Bazaine scarcely brought the 3rd corps and the Guard into action at all, but kept them in reserve. As the afternoon sun waned, the whole weight of the German 10th corps was thrown into the fight about Vionville, and the vanguards of the 8th and 9th came up from Gorze to threaten the French left. Fearing that he might be cut off from Metz on the south—a fear which had unaccountably haunted him all the day—Bazaine continued to feed that part of his lines; and thus Alvensleben was able to hold the positions near the southern road to Verdun, which he had seized in the morning. The day closed with a great cavalry combat on the German left wing in which the French had to give way. Darkness alone put an end to the deadly strife. Little more than two German corps had sufficed to stay the march of an army which potentially numbered in all more than 170,000 men.

On both sides the losses were enormous, namely, some 16,000 killed and wounded. No cannon, standards, or prisoners were taken; but on that day the army of Prince Frederick Charles practically captured the whole of Bazaine's army. The statement may seem overdrawn, but it is none the less true. The advance of other German troops on that night made Bazaine's escape from Metz far more difficult than before, and very early on the morrow he drew back his lines through Gravelotte to a strong position nearer Metz. Thus, a battle, which in a tactical sense seemed to be inconclusive, became, when viewed in the light of strategy, the most decisive of the war. Had Bazaine used even the forces which he had in

the field ready to hand he must have overborne Alvensleben; and the arrival of 170,000 good troops at Verdun or Châlons would have changed the whole course of the war. The campaign would probably have followed the course of the many campaigns waged in the valleys of the Meuse and Marne; and Metz, held by a garrison of suitable size, might have defied the efforts of a large besieging army for fully six months. These conjectures are not fanciful. The duration of the food-supply of a garrison cut off from the outside world varies inversely with the size of that garrison. The experiences of armies invading and defending the east of France also show with general accuracy what might have been expected if the rules of sound strategy had been observed. It was the actual course of events which transcended experience and set all probabilities at defiance.

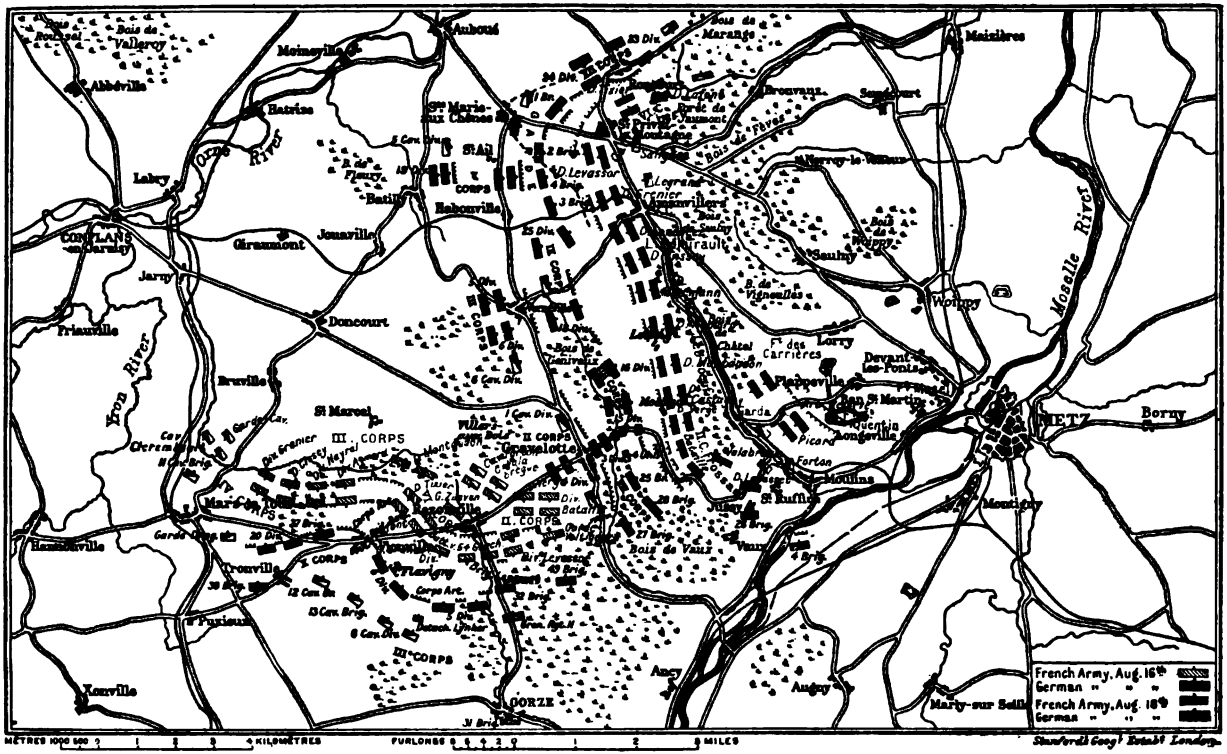
The battle of Gravelotte, or St. Privat, on the 18th, completed the work so hardily begun by the 3rd German corps on the 16th. The need of driving back Bazaine's army upon Metz was pressing, and his inaction on the 17th gave time for nearly all the forces of the First and Second German armies to be brought up to the German positions, some nine miles west of Metz, though one corps was left to the east of that fortress to hinder any attempt of the French to break out on that side. Bazaine, however, massed his great army on the west along a ridge stretching north and south, and presenting, especially in the southern half, steep slopes to the assailants. It also sloped away to the rear, thus enabling the defenders (as was the case with Wellington at Waterloo) secretly to reinforce any part of the line. On the French left wing, too, the slopes curved inward, thus giving the defenders ample advantage

against any flanking movements on that side. On the north, between Amanvillers and Ste. Marie-aux-Chênes, the defence had fewer strong points except those villages, the Jaumont Wood, and the gradual slope of the ground away to the little River Orne, which formed an open glacis. Bazaine massed his reserves on the plateau of Plappeville and to the rear of his left wing; but this cardinal fault in his dispositions—due to his haunting fear of being cut off from Metz—was long hidden by the woods and slopes in the rear of his centre. The position here and on the French left was very strong, and at several points so far concealed the troops that up to 11 A.M. the advancing Germans were in doubt whether the French would not seek to break away towards the north-west. That so great an army would remain merely on the defensive, a course so repugnant to the ardour of the French nature and the traditions of their army, entered into the thoughts of few.

Yet such was the case. The solution of the riddle is to be found in Bazaine's despatch of August 17th to the Minister of War: "We are going to put forth every effort to make good our supplies of all kinds in order to resume our march in two days if that is possible." [1] That the army was badly hampered by lack of stores is certain; but to postpone even for a single day the march to Verdun by the northern road, that by way of Briey, was fatal. Possibly, however, he hoped to deal the Germans so serious a blow if they attacked him on the 18th, as to lighten the heavy task of cutting his way out on the 19th.

If so, he nearly succeeded. The Germans were quite

[1] Bazaine, *Rapport sommaire*, etc. The sentence quoted above is decisive. The defence which Bazaine and his few defenders later on put forward, as well as the attacks of his foes, are of course mixed up with theories evolved *after* the event.



81 PLAN OF THE BATTLES OF REZONVILLE AND GRAVELOTTE

taken aback by the extent and strength of his lines. Their intention was to outflank his right wing, which was believed to stretch no farther north than Amanvillers; but the rather premature advance of Manstein's 9th corps soon drew a deadly fire from that village and the heights on either side, which crushed the artillery of that corps. Soon the Prussian Guards and the 12th corps began to suffer from the fire poured in from the trenches that crowned the hill. On the German right, General Steinmetz, instead of waiting for the hoped-for flank attack on the north to take effect, sent the columns of the First Army to almost certain death in the defile in front of Gravelotte, and he persisted in these costly efforts even when the strength of the French position on that side was patent to all. For this the tough old soldier met with severe censure and ultimate disgrace. In his defence, however, it may be urged that when a great battle is raging with doubtful fortunes, the duty of a commander on the attacking side is to busy the enemy at as many points as possible, so that the final blow may be dealt with telling effect on a vital point where he cannot be adequately reinforced; and the bulldog tactics of Steinmetz in front of Gravelotte, which cost the assailants many thousands of men, at any rate served to keep the French reserves on that side, and thereby weaken the support available for a more important point at the crisis of the fight. It so happened, too, that the action of Steinmetz strengthened the strange misconception of Bazaine that the Germans were striving to cut him off from Metz on the south.

The real aim of the Germans was exactly the contrary, namely, to pin his whole army to Metz by swinging round their right flank on the villages of St. Privat and Raucourt.

Having some 40,000 men under Canrobert in and between these villages, whose solid buildings gave the defence the best of cover, Bazaine had latterly taken little thought for that part of his lines, though it was dangerously far removed from his reserves. These he kept on the south, under the misconception which clung to him here as at Rezonville.

The mistake was to prove fatal. As we have said, the German plan was to turn the French right wing in the more open country on the north. To this end the Prussian Guards and the Saxons, after driving the French outposts from Ste. Marie-aux-Chênes, brought all their strength to the task of crushing the French at their chief stronghold on the right, St. Privat. The struggle of the Prussian Guards up the open slope between that village and Amanvillers left them a mere shadow of their splendid array; but the efforts of the German artillery cost the defenders dear: by seven o'clock St. Privat was in flames, and as the Saxons (the 12th corps), wheeling round from the north after a long flank-march, closed in on the outlying village of Raucourt, Canrobert saw that the day was lost unless he received prompt aid from the Imperial Guard. Bourbaki, however, brought up only some three thousand of these choice troops, and that too late to save St. Privat from the persistent fury of the German onset.

As dusk fell over the scene of carnage the French right fell back in some disorder, even from part of Amanvillers. Farther south, they held their ground. On the whole, they had dealt to their foes a loss of 20,159 men, or nearly a tenth of their total. Of the French forces engaged, some 150,000 in number, 7853 were killed and wounded, and 4419 were taken prisoners. This disproportion in the

losses shows the toughness of the French defence and the (in part) unskilful character of the German attack. On this latter point the recently published Journals of Field Marshal Count von Blumenthal supply some piquant details. He describes the indignation of King William at the wastefulness of the German tactics at Gravelotte: "He complained bitterly that the officers of the higher grades appeared to have forgotten all that had been so carefully taught them at manœuvres, and had apparently all lost their heads." The same authority supplies what may be in part an explanation of this in his comment, written shortly before Gravelotte, that he believed there might not be another battle in the whole war—a remark which savours of presumption and folly. Gravelotte, therefore, cannot be considered as wholly creditable to the victors. Still, the result was that some 180,000 French troops were shut up within the outworks of Metz.[1]

[1] For fuller details of these battles the student should consult the two great works on the subject—the staff histories of the war, issued by the French and German general staffs; Bazaine, *L'Armée du Rhin* and *Episodes de la Guerre;* General Blumenthal's Journals; *Aus drei Kriegen*, by General von Lignitz; Maurice, *The Franco-German War;* Hooper, *The Campaign of Sedan;* the war correspondence of the *Times* and the *Daily News*, published in book form·

CHAPTER III

SEDAN

"Nothing is more rash and contrary to the principles of war than to make a flank march before an army in position, especially when this army occupies heights before which it is necessary to defile."—NAPOLEON I.

THE success of the German operations to the south and west of Metz virtually decided the whole of the campaign. The Germans could now draw on their vast reserves ever coming on from the Rhine, throw an iron ring around that fortress, and thereby deprive France of her only great force of regular troops. The throwing up of field-works and barricades went on with such speed that the blockading forces were able in a few days to detach a strong column towards Châlons-sur-Marne in order to help the army of the Crown Prince of Prussia. That army in the meantime was in pursuit of MacMahon by way of Nancy, and strained every nerve so as to be able to strike at the southern railway lines out of Paris. It was, however, diverted to the north-west by events soon to be described.

The German force detached from the neighbourhood of Metz consisted of the Prussian Guards, the 4th and 12th corps, and two cavalry divisions. This army, known as

the Army of the Meuse, was placed under the command of the Crown Prince of Saxony. Its aim was, in common with the Third German army (that of the Crown Prince of Prussia), to strike at MacMahon before he received reinforcements. The screen of cavalry which preceded the Army of the Meuse passed that river on the 22nd, when the bulk of the forces of the Crown Prince of Prussia crossed not many miles farther to the south. The two armies swept on westwards within easy distance of one another; and on the 23rd their cavalry gleaned news of priceless value, namely, that MacMahon's army had left Châlons. On the next day the great camp was found deserted.

In fact, MacMahon had undertaken a task of terrible difficulty. On taking over the command at Châlons, where Napoleon III. arrived from Metz on the 16th, he found hopeless disorder not only among his own beaten troops, but among many of the newcomers; the worst were the Garde Mobile, many regiments of whom greeted the Emperor with shouts of "*À Paris!*" To meet the Germans in the open plains of Champagne with forces so incoherent and dispirited was sheer madness; and a council of war on the 17th came to the conclusion to fall back on the capital and operate within its outer forts—a step which might enable the army to regain confidence, repress any rising in the capital, and perhaps inflict checks on the Germans, until the provinces rose *en masse* against the invaders. But at this very time the Empress-Regent and the Palikoa Ministry at Paris came to an exactly contrary decision, on the ground that the return of the Emperor with MacMahon's army would look like personal cowardice and a mean desertion of Bazaine at Metz. The Empress was for fighting *à outrance*, and her Government issued orders for a national

rising and the enrolling of bodies of *francs-tireurs*, or irregulars, to harass the Germans.[1]

Their decision was telegraphed to Napoleon III. at Châlons. Against his own better judgment the Emperor yielded to political considerations—that millstone around the neck of the French army in 1870—and decided to strike out to the north with MacMahon's army, and by way of Montmédy stretch a hand to Bazaine, who, on his side, was expected to make for that rendezvous. On the 21st, therefore, they marched to Reims. There the Emperor received a despatch which Bazaine had been able to get through the enemies' lines on the 19th, stating that the Germans were making their way in on Metz, but that he (Bazaine) hoped to break away towards Montmédy and so join MacMahon's army. (This, it will be observed, was *after* Gravelotte had been lost.) Napoleon III. thereupon replied: "Received yours of the 19th at Reims; am going towards Montmédy; shall be on the Aisne the day after tomorrow, and there will act according to circumstances to come to your aid." Bazaine did not receive this message until August 30th, and then made only two weak efforts to break out on the north (August 31st–September 1st). The Marshal's action in sending that message must be pronounced one of the most fatal in the whole war. It led the Emperor and MacMahon to a false belief as to the position at Metz, and furnished a potent argument to the Empress

[1] See General Lebrun's *Guerre de 1870: Bazeilles-Sedan*, for an account of his corps of MacMahon's army.

In view of the events of the late Boer War, it is worth noting that the Germans never acknowledged the *francs-tireurs* as soldiers, and forthwith issued an order ending with the words, "They are amenable to martial law and liable to be sentenced to death" (Maurice, *Franco-German War*, p. 215).

and Palikao at Paris to urge a march towards Montmédy at all costs.

Doubtfully MacMahon led his straggling array from Reims in a north-easterly direction towards Stenay on the Meuse. Rain checked his progress, and dispirited the troops; but on the 27th of August, while about half-way between the Aisne and the Meuse, his outposts touched those of the enemy. They were, in fact, those of the Prussian Crown Prince, whose army was about to cross the northern roads over the Argonne, the line of hills that saw the French stem the Prussian invasion in 1792. Far different was the state of affairs now. National enthusiasm, organisation, enterprise—all were on the side of the invaders. As has been pointed out, their horsemen found out on the 23rd that the Châlons camp was deserted; on the next day their scouts found out from a Parisian newspaper that MacMahon was at Reims; and, on the day following, newspaper tidings that had come round by way of London revealed the secret that MacMahon was striving to reach Bazaine.

How it came about that this news escaped the eye of the censor has not been explained. If it was the work of an English journalist, that does not absolve the official censorship from the charge of gross carelessness in leaving even a loophole for the transmission of important secrets. Newspaper correspondents, of course, are the natural enemies of governments in time of war; and the experience of the year 1870 shows that the fate of empires may depend on the efficacy of the arrangements for controlling them. As a proof of the superiority of the German organisation, or of the higher patriotism of their newspapers, we may mention that no tidings of urgent importance leaked out

through the German press. This may have been due to a solemn declaration made by German newspaper editors and correspondents that they would never reveal such secrets; but, from what we know of the fierce competition of newspapers for priority of news, it is reasonable to suppose that the German Government took very good care that none came in their way.

As a result of the excellent scouting of their cavalry and of the slipshod press arrangements of the French Government, the German Army of the Meuse, on the 26th, took a general turn towards the north-west. This movement brought its outposts near to the southernmost divisions of MacMahon, and sent through that Marshal's staff the foreboding thrill felt by the commander of an unseaworthy craft at the oncoming of the first gust of a cyclone. He saw the madness of holding on his present course and issued orders for a retreat to Mézières, a fortress on the Meuse below Sedan. Once more, however, the Palikao Ministry intervened to forbid this salutary move,—the only way out of imminent danger,—and ordered him to march to the relief of Bazaine. At this crisis Napoleon III. showed the good sense which seemed to have deserted the French politicians: he advised the Marshal not to obey this order if he thought it dangerous. Nevertheless MacMahon decided to yield to the supposed interests of the dynasty, which the Emperor was ready to sacrifice to the higher claims of the safety of France. Their rôles were thus curiously reversed. The Emperor reasoned as a sound patriot and a good strategist. MacMahon must have felt the same promptings, but obedience to the Empress and the Ministry, or chivalrous regard for Bazaine, overcame his scruples. He decided to plod on towards the Meuse.

The Germans were now on the alert to entrap this army that exposed its flank in a long line of march near to the Belgian frontier. Their ubiquitous horsemen captured French despatches which showed them the intended moves in MacMahon's desperate game; Moltke hurried up every available division; and the elder of the two Alvenslebens had the honour of surprising de Failly's corps amidst the woods of the Ardennes near Beaumont, as they were in the midst of a meal. The French rallied and offered a brisk defence, but finally fell back in confusion northwards on Mouzon, with the loss of 2000 prisoners and 42 guns (August 30th).

This mishap, the lack of provisions, and the fatigue and demoralisation of his troops, caused MacMahon on the 31st, to fall back on Sedan, a little town in the valley of the Meuse. It is surrounded by ramparts planned by the great Vauban, but, being commanded by wooded heights, it no longer has the importance that it possessed before the age of long-range guns of precision. The chief strength of the position for defence lay in the deep loop of the river below the town, the dense Garenne Wood to the north-east, and the hollow formed by the Givonne brook on the east, with the important village of Bazeilles. It is therefore not surprising that von Moltke, on seeing the French forces concentrating in this hollow, remarked to von Blumenthal, chief of the staff: "Now we have them in a trap; to-morrow we must cross over the Meuse early in the morning."

The Emperor and MacMahon seem even then, on the afternoon of the 31st, to have hoped to give their weary troops a brief rest, supply them with provisions and stores from the fortress, and on the morrow, or the 2nd, make their

escape by way of Mézières. Possibly they might have done so on that night, and certainly they could have reached the Belgian frontier, only some six miles distant, and there laid down their arms to the Belgian troops whom the resourceful Bismarck had set on the *qui vive*. To remain quiet even for a day in Sedan was to court disaster; yet passivity characterised the French headquarters and the whole army on that afternoon and evening. True, MacMahon gave orders for the bridge over the Meuse at Donchéry to be blown up, but the engine-driver who took the engineers charged with this important task lost his nerve when German shells whizzed about his engine, and drove off before the powder and tools could be deposited. A second party, sent later on, found that bridge in the possession of the enemy. On the east side, above Sedan, the Bavarians seized the railway bridge south of Bazeilles, driving off the French who sought to blow it up.[1]

Over the Donchéry bridge and two pontoon bridges constucted below that village the Germans poured their troops before dawn of September 1st, and as the morning fog of that day slowly lifted, their columns were seen working round the north of the deep loop of the Meuse, thus cutting off escape on the west and north-west. Meanwhile, on the other side of the town, von der Tann's Bavarians had begun the fight. Pressing in on Bazeilles so as to hinder the retreat of the enemy (as had been so effectively done at Colombey, on the east of Metz), they at first surprised the sleeping French, but quickly drew on themselves a sharp and sustained counter-attack from the marines attached to the 12th French corps.

[1] Moltke, *The Franco-German War*, i., p. 114; Hooper, *The Campaign of Sedan*, p. 296.

In order to understand the persistent vigour of the French on this side, we must note the decisions formed by their headquarters on August 31st and early on September 1st. At a council of war held on the afternoon of the 31st no decision was reached, probably because the exhaustion of the 5th and 7th corps and the attack of the Bavarians on the 12th corps at Bazeilles rendered any decided movement very difficult. The general conclusion was that the army must have some repose; and Germans afterwards found on the battlefield a French order—"Rest to-day for the whole army." But already, on the 30th, an officer had come from Paris determined to restore the morale of the army and break through towards Bazaine. This was General de Wimpffen, who had gained distinction in previous wars, and, coming lately from Algeria to Paris, was there appointed to supersede de Failly in command of the 5th corps. Nor was this all. The Palikao Ministry apparently had some doubts as to MacMahon's energy, and feared that the Emperor himself hampered the operations. De Wimpffen therefore received an unofficial mandate to infuse vigour into the counsels at headquarters, and was entrusted with a secret written order to take over the supreme command if anything were to happen to MacMahon. On taking command of the 5th corps on the 30th, de Wimpffen found it demoralised by the hurried retreat through Mouzon; but neither this fact nor the exhaustion of the whole army abated the determination of this stalwart soldier to break through towards Metz.

Early on September 1st the positions held by the French formed, roughly speaking, a triangle resting on the right bank of the Meuse from near Bazeilles to Sedan and Glaire. Damming operations and the heavy rains of previous days

had spread the river over the low-lying meadows, thus rendering it difficult, if not impossible, for an enemy to cross under fire; but this same fact lessened the space by which the French could endeavour to break through. Accordingly they deployed their forces almost wholly along the inner slopes of the Givonne brook and of the smaller stream that flows from the high land about Illy down to the village of Floing and thence to the Meuse. The heights of Illy, crowned by the Calvaire, formed the apex of the French position, while Floing and Bazeilles formed the other corners of what was in many respects good fighting-ground. Their strength was about 120,000 men, though many of these were disabled or almost helpless from fatigue; that of the Germans was greater on the whole, but three of their corps could not reach the scene of action before 1 P.M. owing to the heaviness of the roads.[1] At first, then, the French had a superiority of force and far more compact position, as will be seen by the plan on page 94.

We now resume the account of the battle. The fighting in and around Bazeilles speedily led to one very important result. At 6 A.M. a splinter of a shell fired by the assailants from the hills north-east of that village severely wounded Marshal MacMahon as he watched the conflict from a point in front of the village of Balan. Thereupon he named General Ducrot as his successor, passing over the claims of two generals senior to him. Ducrot, realising the seriousness of the position, prepared to draw off the troops towards the Calvaire of Illy preparatory to a retreat on Mézières by way of St. Menges. The news of this impending retreat, which must be conducted under the hot

[1] Maurice, *The Franco-German War*, p. 235.

fire of the Germans now threatening the line of the Givonne, cut de Wimpffen to the quick. He knew that the Crown Prince held a force to the south-west of Sedan, ready to fall on the flank of any force that sought to break away to Mézières; and a temporary success of his own 5th corps against the Saxons in La Moncelle strengthened his prepossession in favour of a combined move eastwards towards Carignan and Metz. Accordingly, about nine o'clock he produced the secret order empowering him to succeed MacMahon should the latter be incapacitated. Ducrot at once yielded to the ministerial ukase; the Emperor sought to intervene in favour of Ducrot, only to be waved aside by the confident de Wimpffen; and thus the long conflict between MacMahon and the Palikao Ministry ended in victory for the latter—and disaster for France.[1]

In hazarding this last statement we do not mean to imply that a retreat on Mézières would then have saved the whole army. It might, however, have enabled part of it to break through either to Mézières or the Belgian boundary; and it is possible that Ducrot had the latter objective in view when he ordered the concentration at Illy. In any case, that move was now countermanded in favour of a desperate attack on the eastern assailants. It need hardly be said that the result of these vacillations was deplorable, unsteadying the defenders, and giving the assailants time to bring up troops and cannon, and thereby strengthen their grip on every important point. Especially valuable was the approach of the 2nd Bavarian corps; setting out from Raucourt at 4 A.M. it reached the hills south of Sedan about 9, and its artillery posted near Frénois began a terrible fire on the town and the French troops near it.

[1] See Lebrun's *Guerre de 1870: Bazeilles-Sédan*, for these disputes.

About the same time the second division of the Saxons reinforced their hard-pressed comrades to the north of La Moncelle, where, on de Wimpffen's orders, the French were making a strong forward move. The opportune arrival of these new German troops saved their artillery, which had been doing splendid service. The French were driven back across the Givonne with heavy loss, and the massed battery of one hundred guns crushed all further efforts at advance on this side. Meanwhile at Bazeilles the marines had worthily upheld the honour of the French arms. Despite the terrible artillery fire now concentrated on the village, they pushed the German footmen back, but never quite drove them out. These, when reinforced, renewed the fight with equal obstinacy; the inhabitants themselves joined in with whatever weapons fury suggested to them; and as that merciless strife swayed to and fro amidst the roar of artillery, the crash of walls, and the hiss of flame, war was seen in all its naked ferocity.

Yet here again, as at all points, the defence was gradually overborne by the superiority of the German artillery. About eleven o'clock the French, despite their superhuman efforts, were outflanked by the Bavarians and Saxons on the north of the village. Even then, when the regulars fell back, some of the inhabitants went on with their mad resistance; a great part of the village was now in flames, but whether they were kindled by the Germans, or by the retiring French so as to delay the victors, has never been cleared up. In either case, several of the inhabitants perished in the flames; and it is admitted that the Bavarians burnt some of the villagers for firing on them from the windows.[1]

[1] M. Busch, *Bismarck in the Franco-German War*, i., p. 114.

In the defence of Bazeilles the French infantry showed its usual courage and tenacity. Elsewhere the weary and dispirited columns were speedily becoming demoralised under the terrific artillery fire which the Germans poured in from many points of vantage. The Prussian Guards coming up from Villers Cernay about 10 A.M. planted their formidable batteries so as to sweep the Bois de Garenne and the ground about the Calvaire d'Illy from the eastward; and about that time the guns of the 5th and 11th German corps, that had early crossed the Meuse below Sedan, were brought to bear on the west front of that part of the French position. The apex of the defenders' triangle was thus severely searched by some 200 guns; and their discharges, soon supported by the fire of skirmishers and volleys from the troops, broke all forward movements of the French on that side. On the south and south-east as many cannon swept the French lines, but from a greater distance.

Up to nearly noon there seemed some chance of the French bursting through on the north, and some of them did escape. Yet no well-sustained effort took place on that side, apparently because, even after the loss of Bazeilles at eleven o'clock, de Wimffpen clung to the belief that he could cut his way out towards Carignan, if not by Bazeilles, then perhaps by some other way, as Daigny or La Moncelle. The reasoning by which he convinced himself is hard to follow; for the only road to Carignan on that side runs through Bazeilles. Perhaps we ought to say that he did not reason, but was haunted by one fixed notion; and the history of war from the time of the Roman Varro down to the age of the Austrian Mack and the French de Wimpffen shows that men whose brains work in grooves and take

no account of what is on the right hand and the left, are not fit to command armies; they only yield easy triumphs to the great masters of warfare,—Hannibal, Napoleon the Great, and von Moltke.

De Wimpffen, we say, paid little heed to the remonstrances of Generals Douay and Ducrot at leaving the northern apex and the north-western front of the defence to be crushed by weight of metal and of numbers. He rode off towards Balan, near which village the former defenders of Bazeilles were making a gallant and partly successful stand, and no reinforcements were sent to the hills on the north. The villages of Illy and Floing were lost; then the French columns gave ground even up the higher ground behind them, so great was the pressure of the German converging advance. Worst of all, skulkers began to hurry from the ranks and seek shelter in the woods, or even under the ramparts of Sedan far in the rear. The French gunners still plied their guns with steady devotion, though hopelessly outmatched at all points, but it was clear that only a great forward dash could save the day. Ducrot therefore ordered General Margueritte with three choice cavalry regiments (Chasseurs d'Afrique) and several squadrons of Lancers to charge the advancing lines. Moving forward from the northern edge of the Bois de Garenne to judge his ground, Margueritte fell mortally wounded. De Bauffremont took his place, and those brave horsemen swept forward on a task as hopeless as that of the Light Brigade at Balaclava, or that of the French Cuirassiers at Wörth.[1] Their conduct was as glorious; but the terrible

[1] Lebrun (*op. cit.*, pp. 126–127; also Appendix D) maintains that de Bauffremont then led the charge, de Gallifet leading only the 3rd Chasseurs d'Afrique.

power of the modern rifle was once more revealed. The pounding of distant batteries they could brave; disordered but defiant they swept on towards the German lines, but when the German infantry opened fire almost at pistol range, rank after rank of the horsemen went down as grass before the scythe. Here and there small bands of horsemen charged the footmen on the flank, even in a few cases on their rear, it is said; but the charge, though bravely renewed, did little except to delay the German triumph and retrieve the honour of France.

By about two o'clock the French cavalry was practically disabled, and there now remained no Imperial Guard, as at Waterloo, to shed some rays of glory over the disaster. Meanwhile, however, de Wimpffen had resolved to make one more effort. Gathering about him a few of the best infantry battalions in and about Sedan, he besought the Emperor to join him in cutting a way out towards the east. The Emperor sent no answer to this appeal; he judged that too much blood had already been needlessly shed. Still de Wimpffen persisted in his mad endeavour: bursting upon the Bavarians in the village of Balan, he drove them back for a space until his men, disordered by the rush, fell before the stubborn rally of the Bavarians and Saxons. With the collapse of this effort and the cutting up of the French cavalry behind Floing, the last frail barriers to the enemy's advance gave way. The roads to Sedan were now thronged with masses of fugitives, whose struggles to pass the drawbridges into the little fortress resembled an African battue; for King William and his staff, in order to hurry on the inevitable surrender, bade the two hundred or more pieces on the southern heights play upon the town. Still de Wimpffen refused to surrender,

and, despite the orders of his sovereign, continued the hopeless struggle. At length, to stay the frightful carnage, the Emperor himself ordered the white flag to be hoisted.[1] A German officer went down to arrange preliminaries, and to his astonishment was ushered into the presence of the Emperor. The German staff had no knowledge of his whereabouts. On hearing the news, King William, who throughout the day sat on horseback at the top of the slope behind Frénois, said to his son, the Crown Prince, "This is indeed a great success; and I thank thee that thou hast contributed to it." He gave his hand to his son, who kissed it, and then, in turn, to Moltke and to Bismarck, who kissed it also. In a short time, the French General Reille brought to the King the following autograph letter:

"MONSIEUR MON FRÈRE—N'ayant pu mourir au milieu de mes troupes, il ne me reste qu'à remettre mon épée entre les mains de Votre Majesté.—Je suis de Votre Majesté le bon Frère

"NAPOLÉON.

' SÉDAN, le 1er Septembre, 1870.

The King named von Moltke to arrange the terms and then rode away to a village farther south, it being arranged, probably at Bismarck's suggestion, that he should not see the Emperor until all was settled. Meanwhile de Wimpffen and other French generals, in conference with von Moltke, Bismarck, and Blumenthal, at the village of Donchéry, sought to gain easy terms by appealing to their generosity and by arguing that this would end the war and earn the gratitude of France. To all appeals for permission to let the captive army go to Algeria, or to lay down its arms in Belgium, the Germans were deaf, Bismarck

[1] Lebrun, *op. cit.*, pp. 130 *et seq.*, for the disputes about surrender.

at length plainly saying that the French were an envious and jealous people on whose gratitude it would be idle to count. De Wimpffen then threatened to renew the fight rather than surrender, to which von Moltke grimly assented, but Bismarck again interposed to bring about a prolongation of the truce. Early on the morrow, Napoleon himself drove out to Donchéry in the hope of seeing the King. The Bismarckian Boswell has given us a glimpse of him as he then appeared: "The look in his light grey eyes was somewhat soft and dreamy, like that of people who have lived too fast." [In his case, we may remark, this was induced by the painful disease which never left him all through the campaign, and carried him off three years later.] "He wore his cap a little on the right, to which side his head also inclined. His short legs were out of proportion to the long upper body. His whole appearance was a little unsoldier-like. The man looked too soft, I might say too spongy, for the uniform he wore."

Bismarck, the stalwart Teuton who had wrecked his policy at all points, met him at Donchéry and foiled his wish to see the King, declaring this to be impossible until the terms of the capitulation were settled. The Emperor then had a conversation with the Chancellor in a little cottage belonging to a weaver. Seating themselves on two rush-bottomed chairs beside the one deal table, they conversed on the greatest affairs of State. The Emperor said he had not sought this war—"he had been driven into it by the pressure of public opinion. I replied" (wrote Bismarck) "that neither had any one with us wished for war—the King least of all." [1] Napoleon then pleaded for

[1] Busch, *Bismarck on the Franco-German War*, i., p. 109. Contrast this statement with his later efforts (*Reminiscences*, ii., pp. 95–100) to prove that he helped to bring on war.

generous terms, but admitted that he, as a prisoner, could not fix them; they must be arranged with de Wimpffen. About ten o'clock the latter agreed to an unconditional surrender for the rank and file of the French army, but those officers who bound themselves by their word of honour (in writing) not to fight again during the present war were to be set free. Napoleon then had an interview with the King. What transpired is not known, but when the Emperor came out "his eyes," wrote Bismarck, "were full of tears."

The fallen monarch accepted the King's offer of the castle of Wilhelmshöhe near Cassel for his residence up to the end of the war; it was the abode on which Jerome Bonaparte had spent millions of thalers, wrung from Westphalian burghers, during his brief sovereignty in 1807–13. Thither his nephew set out two days after the catastrophe of Sedan. And this, as it seems, was the end of a dynasty whose rise to power dated from the thrilling events of the Bridge of Lodi, Arcola, Rivoli, and the Pyramids. The French losses on September 1st were about 3000 killed, 14,000 wounded, and 21,000 prisoners. On the next day there surrendered 83,000 prisoners by virtue of the capitulation, along with 419 field-pieces and 139 cannon of the fortress. Some 3000 had escaped, through the gap in the German lines on the north-east, to the Belgian frontier, and there laid down their arms.

The news of this unparalleled disaster began to leak out at Paris late on the 2nd; and on the morrow, when details were known, crowds thronged into the streets shouting, "Down with the Empire! Long live the Republic!" Power still remained with the Empress-Regent and the Palikao

LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Ministry. All must admit that the Empress Eugénie did what was possible in this hopeless position. She appealed to that charming literary man, M. Prosper Mérimée, to go to his friend, M. Thiers (at whom we shall glance presently), and beg him to form a Ministry that would save the Empire for the young Prince Imperial. M. Thiers politely but firmly refused to give a helping hand to the dynasty which he looked on as the author of his country's ruin.

On that day the Empress also summoned the Chambers —the Senate and the Corps Législatif—a vain expedient, for in times of crisis the French look to a man, not to Chambers. The Empire had no man at hand. General Trochu, Governor of Paris, was suspected of being a republican—at any rate he let matters take their course. On the 4th, vast crowds filled the streets; a rush was made to the Chamber, where various compromises were being discussed; the doors were forced, and amid wild excitement a proposal to dethrone the Napoleonic dynasty was put. Two republican deputies, Gambetta and Jules Favre, declared that the Hôtel de Ville was the fit place to declare the Republic. There, accordingly, it was proclaimed, the deputies for the city of Paris taking office as the Government of National Defence. They were just in time to prevent socialists like Blanqui, Flourens, and Henri Rochefort from installing the "Commune" in power. The Empress and the Prince Imperial at once fled, and, apart from a protest by the Senate, no voice was raised in defence of the Empire. Jules Favre, who took up the burden of Foreign Affairs in the new Government of National Defence, was able to say in his circular note of September 6th that "the revolution of September 4th took

place without the shedding of a drop of blood or the loss of liberty to a single person." [1]

That fact shows the unreality of Bonapartist rule in France. At bottom Napoleon III.'s ascendancy was due to several causes that told against possible rivals rather than directly in his favour. Hatred of the socialists, whose rash political experiments had led to the bloody days of street fighting in Paris in June, 1848, counted for much. Added to this was the unpopularity of the House of Orleans after the sordid and uninteresting rule of Louis Philippe (1830–48). The antiquated royalism of the elder or Legitimist branch of that ill-starred dynasty made it equally an impossibility. Louis Napoleon promised to do what his predecessors, monarchical and republican, had signally failed to do, namely, to reconcile the claims of liberty and order at home and uphold the prestige of France abroad. For the first ten years the glamour of his name, the skill with which he promoted the material prosperity of France, and the successes of his early wars, promised to build up a lasting power. But then came the days of failing health and tottering prestige—of financial scandals, of the Mexican blunder, of the humiliation before the rising power of Prussia. To retrieve matters he toyed with democracy in France, and finally allowed his ministers to throw down a challenge to Prussia; for, in the words of a French historian, the conditions on which he held power "condemned him to be brilliant." [2]

Failing at Sedan, he lost all; and he knew it. His reign, in fact, was one long disaster for France. The

[1] Gabriel Hanotaux, *Contemporary France*, i., p. 14 (Eng. edit.).

[2] Said in 1852 by an eminent Frenchman to our countryman, Nassau Senior (Journals, ii., *ad fin.*).

canker of moral corruption began to weaken her public life when the creatures of whom he made use in the *coup d'état* of 1851 crept into place and power. The flashy sensationalism of his policy, setting the tone for Parisian society, was fatal to the honest, unseen drudgery which builds up a solid edifice alike in public and in private life. Even the better qualities of his nature told against ultimate success. As has been shown, his vague but generous ideas on nationality drew French policy away from the paths of obvious self-interest after the year 1864, and gave an easy victory to the keen and objective statecraft of Bismarck. That he loved France as sincerely as he believed in the power of the Bonapartist tradition to help her can scarcely admit of doubt. His conduct during the War of 1870 showed him to be disinterested, while his vision was clearer than that of the generals about him. But in the field of high policy, as in the moral events that make or mar a nation's life, his influence told heavily against the welfare of France; and he must have carried into exile the consciousness that his complex nature and ill-matched strivings had but served to bring his dynasty and his country to an unexampled overthrow.

It may be well to notice here an event of world-wide importance, which came as a sequel to the military collapse of France. Italians had always looked to the day when Rome would be the national capital. The great Napoleon during his time of exile at St. Helena had uttered the prophetic words: "Italy isolated between her natural limits is destined to form a great and powerful nation. . . . Rome will without doubt be chosen by the Italians as their capital." The political and economic needs of the present

coinciding herein with the voice of tradition, always so strong in Italian hearts, pointed imperiously to Rome as the only possible centre of national life.

As was pointed out in the Introduction, Pius IX. after the years of revolution, 1848–49, felt the need of French troops in his capital, and his harsh and reactionary policy (or rather, that of his masterful Secretary of State, Antonelli) before long completely alienated the feelings of his subjects.

After the master-mind of Cavour was removed by death, (June, 1861), the patriots struggled desperately, but in vain, to rid Rome of the presence of foreign troops and win her for the national cause. Garibaldi's raids of 1862 and 1867 were foiled, the one by Italian, the other by French troops; and the latter case, which led to the sharp fight of Mentana, effaced any feelings of gratitude to Napoleon III. for his earlier help, which survived after his appropriation of Savoy and Nice. Thus matters remained in 1867–70, the Pope relying on the support of French bayonets to coerce his own subjects. Clearly this was a state of things which could not continue. The first great shock must always bring down a political edifice which rests not on its own foundations, but on external buttresses. These were suddenly withdrawn by the War of 1870. Early in August, Napoleon ordered all his troops to leave the Papal States; and the downfall of his power a month later absolved Victor Emmanuel from the claims of gratitude which he still felt towards his ally of 1859.

At once the forward wing of the Italian national party took action in a way that either forced, or more probably encouraged, Victor Emmanuel's Government to step in under the pretext of preventing the creation of a Roman

Republic. The King invited Pius IX. to assent to the peaceful occupation of Rome by the royal troops, and, on receiving the expected refusal, moved forward 35,000 soldiers. The resistance of the 11,000 Papal troops proved to be mainly a matter of form. The wall near the Porta Pia soon crumbled before the Italian cannon, and after a brief struggle at the breach the white flag was hoisted at the bidding of the Pope (September 20th).

Thus fell the temporal power of the Papacy. The event aroused comparatively little notice in that year of marvels, but its results have been momentous. At the time there was a general sense of relief, if not of joy, in Italy, that the national movement had reached its goal, albeit in so tame and uninspiring a manner. Rome had long been a prey to political reaction, accompanied by police supervision of the most exasperating kind. The *plébiscite* as to the future government gave 133,681 votes for Victor Emmanuel's rule, and only 1507 negative votes.[1]

Now, for the first time since the days of Napoleon I. and of the short-lived Republic for which Mazzini and Garibaldi worked and fought so nobly in 1849, the Eternal City began to experience the benefits of progressive rule. The royal Government soon proved to be very far from perfect. Favouritism, the multiplication of sinecures, municipal corruption, and the prosaic inroads of builders and speculators soon helped to mar the work of political reconstruction, and began to arouse a certain amount of regret for the more picturesque times of the Papal rule. A sentimental reaction of this kind is certain to occur in all cases of political change, especially in a city where tradition and emotion so long held sway.

[1] Countess Cesaresco, *The Liberation of Italy*, p. 411.

The consciences of the faithful were also troubled when the *fiat* of the Pope went forth excommunicating the robber-king and all his chief abettors in the work of sacrilege. Sons of the Church throughout Italy were bidden to hold no intercourse with the interlopers and to take no part in elections to the Italian Parliament which thenceforth met in Rome. The schism between the Vatican and the King's Court and Government was never to be bridged over; and even to-day it constitutes one of the most perplexing problems of Italy.

Despite the fact that Rome and Italy gained little of that mental and moral stimulus which might have resulted from the completion of the national movement solely by the action of the people themselves, the fact nevertheless remains that Rome needed Italy and Italy needed Rome. The disappointment loudly expressed by idealists, sentimentalists, and reactionaries must not blind us to the fact that the Italians, and above all the Romans, have benefited by the advent of unity, political freedom, and civic responsibility. It may well be that, in acting as the leader of a constitutional people, the Eternal City will, little by little, develop higher gifts than those nurtured under Papal tutelage, and perhaps as beneficent to humanity as those which in the ancient world bestowed laws on Europe.

As Mazzini always insisted, political progress, to be sound, must be based ultimately on moral progress. It is, of its very nature, slow, and is therefore apt to escape the eyes of the moralist or cynic who dwells on the untoward signs of the present. But the Rome for which Mazzini and his compatriots yearned and struggled can hardly fail ultimately to rise to the height of her ancient traditions and of that noble prophecy of Dante: "*There* is the seat

of empire. There never was, and there never will be, a people endowed with such capacity to acquire command, with more vigour to maintain it, and more gentleness in its exercise, than the Italian nation, and especially the Holy Roman people." The lines with which Mr. Swinburne closed his "Dedication" of *Songs before Sunrise* to Joseph Mazzini are worthy of finding a place side by side with the words of the mediæval seer:

> Yea, even she as at first,
> Yea, she alone and none other,
> Shall cast down, shall build up, shall bring home,
> Slake earth's hunger and thirst,
> Lighten, and lead as a mother;
> First name of the world's names, Rome.

CHAPTER IV

THE FOUNDING OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC

"ἐγίγνετό τε λόγῳ μὲν δημοκρατία, ἔργῳ δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ πρώτου ἀνδρὸς ἀρχή."

"Thus Athens, though still in name a democracy, was in fact ruled by her greatest man."—THUCYDIDES, II., lxv.

THE aim of this work being to trace the outlines only of those outstanding events which made the chief States of the world what they are to-day, we can give only the briefest glance at the remaining events of the Franco-German War and the splendid though hopeless rally attempted by the newly installed Government of National Defence. Few facts in recent history have a more thrilling interest than the details of the valiant efforts made by the young Republic against the invaders. The spirit in which they were made breathed through the words of M. Picard's proclamation on September 4th: "The Republic saved us from the invasion of 1792. The Republic is proclaimed."

Inspiring as was this reference to the great and successful effort of the First Republic against the troops of Central Europe in 1792, it was misleading. At that time Prussia had lapsed into a state of weakness through the double evils of favouritism and a facing-both-ways policy. Now she felt the strength born of sturdy championship of a great principle, that of Nationality, which had ranged nearly the whole of the German race on her side. France,

on the other hand, owing to the shocking blunders of her politicians and generals during the war, had but one army corps free, that of General Vinoy, which hastily retreated from the neighbourhood of Mézières towards Paris on September 2nd to 4th. She therefore had to count almost entirely on the Garde Mobile, the Garde Nationale, and *francs-tireurs;* but bitter experience was to show that this raw material could not be organised in a few weeks to withstand the trained and triumphant legions of Germany.

Nevertheless there was no thought of making peace with the invaders. The last message of Count Palikao to the Chambers had been one of defiance to the enemy; and the Parisian deputies, nearly all of them Republicans, who formed the Government of National Defence, scouted all faint-hearted proposals. Their policy took form in the famous phrase of Jules Favre, Minister of Foreign Affairs: "We will give up neither an inch of our territory nor a stone of our fortresses." This being so, all hope of compromise with the Germans was vain. Favre had interviews with Bismarck at the Château de Ferrières (September 19th); but his fine oratory, even his tears, made no impression on the Iron Chancellor, who declared that in no case would an armistice be granted, not even for the election of a National Assembly, unless France agreed to give up Alsace and a part of Lorraine, allowing the German troops also to hold, among other places, Strassburg and Toul.

Obviously, a self-constituted body like the provisional government at Paris could not accept these terms, which most deeply concerned the nation at large. In the existing temper of Paris and France, the mention of such terms meant war to the knife, as Bismarck must have known. On their side, Frenchmen could not believe that

their great capital, with its bulwarks and ring of outer forts, could be taken; while the Germans—so it seems from the Diary of General von Blumenthal—looked forward to its speedy capitulation. One man there was who saw the pressing need of foreign aid. M. Thiers (whose personality will concern us a little later) undertook to go on a mission to the chief Powers of Europe in the hope of urging one or more of them to intervene on behalf of France.

The details of that mission are, of course, not fully known. We can only state here that Russia now repaid Prussia's help in crushing the Polish rebellion of 1863 by neutrality, albeit tinged with a certain jealousy of German success. Bismarck had been careful to dull that feeling by suggesting that she (Russia) should take the present opportunity of annulling the provision, made after the Crimean War, which prevented her from sending warships on to the Black Sea; and this was subsequently done, under a thin diplomatic disguise, at the Congress of London (March, 1871). Bismarck's astuteness in supporting Russia at this time, therefore, kept that Power quiet. As for Austria, she undoubtedly wished to intervene, but did not choose to risk a war with Russia, which would probably have brought another overthrow. Italy would not unsheathe her sword for France unless the latter recognised her right to Rome (which the Italian troops entered on September 20th). To this the young French Republic demurred. Great Britain, of course, adhered to the policy of neutrality which she at first declared.[1]

[1] See Débidour, *Histoire diplomatique de l'Europe*, ii., pp. 412–415. For Bismarck's fears of intervention, especially that of Austria, see his *Reminiscences*, ii., p. 109 (Eng. edit.); Count Beust's *Aus drei Viertel-Jahrhunderten*, pt. ii., pp. 361, 395; for Thiers's efforts see his *Notes* on the years 1870–73 (Paris, 1904).

Accordingly, France had to rely on her own efforts. They were surprisingly great. Before the complete investment of Paris (September 20th), a delegation of the Government of National Defence had gone forth to Tours with the aim of stirring up the provinces to the succour of the besieged capital. Probably the whole of the Government ought to have gone there; for, shut up in the capital, it lost touch with the provinces, save when balloons and carrier-pigeons eluded the German sharpshooters and brought precious news.[1] The mistake was seen in time to enable a man of wondrous energy to leave Paris by balloon on October 7th, to descend as a veritable *deus ex machinâ* on the faltering Delegation at Tours, and to stir the blood of France by his invective. There was a touch of the melodramatic not only in his apparition but in his speeches. Frenchmen, however, follow a leader all the better if he is a good stage-manager and a clever actor. The new leader was both; but he was something more.

Léon Gambetta had leaped to the front rank at the bar in the closing days of 1868 by a passionate outburst against the *coup d'état*, uttered, to the astonishment of all, in a small Court of Correctional Police, over a petty case of State prosecution of a small Parisian paper. Rejecting the ordinary methods of defence, the young barrister flung defiance at Napoleon III. as the author of the *coup d'état* and of all the present degradation of France. The daring of the young man, who thus turned the tables on the

[1] M. Grégoire, in his *Histoire de France*, iv., p. 647, states that 64 balloons left Paris during the siege, 5 were captured, and 2 lost in the sea; 363 carrier-pigeons left the city and 57 came in. For details of the French efforts, see *Les Responsibilités de la Defense nationale*, by H. Génevois; also *The People's War in France, 1870–1871*, by Colonel L. Hale (The Pall Mall Military Series, 1904), founded on Hönig's *Der Volkskrieg an der Loire*.

authorities and impeached the head of the State, made a profound impression; it was redoubled by the southern intensity of his thought and expression. Disdaining all forms of rhetoric, he poured forth a torrent of ideas, clothing them in the first words that came to his facile tongue, enforcing them by blows of the fist or the most violent gestures, and yet, again, modulating the roar of passion to the falsetto of satire or the whisper of emotion. His short, thick-set frame, vibrating with strength, doubled the force of all his utterances. Nor did they lack the glamour of poetry and romance that might be expected from his Italian ancestry. He came of a Genoese stock that had for some time settled in the south of France. Strange fate, that called him now to the front with the aim of repairing the ills wrought to France by another Italian House! In time of peace his power over men would have raised him to the highest positions had his Bohemian exuberance of thought and speech been tamable. It was not. He scorned prudence and moderation at all times, and his behaviour, when the wave of revolution at last carried him to power, gave point to the taunt of Thiers,—"C'est un fou furieux." Such was the man who now brought the quenchless ardour of his patriotism to the task of rousing France. So far as words and energy could call forth armies, he succeeded; but as he lacked all military knowledge, his blind self-confidence was to cost France dear.

Possibly the new levies of the Republic might at some point have pierced the immense circle of the German lines around Paris (for at first the besieging forces were less numerous than the besieged), had not the assailants been strengthened by the fall of Metz (October 27). This is not

the place to discuss the culpability of Bazaine for the softness shown in the defence. The voluminous evidence taken at his trial shows that he was very slack in the critical days at the close of August; it is also certain that Bismarck duped him under the pretence that, on certain conditions to be arranged with the Empress Eugénie, his army might be kept intact for the sake of re-establishing the Empire.[1] The whole scheme was merely a device to gain time and keep Bazaine idle, and the German Chancellor succeeded here as at all points in his great game. On October 27th, then, 6000 officers, 173,000 rank and file, were constrained by famine to surrender, along with 541 field-pieces and 800 siege guns.

This capitulation, the greatest recorded in the history of civilised nations, dealt a death-blow to the hopes of France. Strassburg had hoisted the white flag a month earlier; and the besiegers of these fortresses were free to march westward and overwhelm the new levies. After gaining a success at Coulommiers, near Orleans (November 9th), the French were speedily driven down the valley of the Loire and thence as far west as Le Mans. In the North, at St. Quentin, the Germans were equally successful, as also in Burgundy against that once effective free lance, Garibaldi, who came with his sons to fight for the Re-

[1] Bazaine gives the details from his point of view in his *Episodes de la Guerre de 1870 et le Blocus de Metz* (Madrid, 1883). One of the go-betweens was a man Regnier, who pretended to come from the Empress Eugénie, then at Hastings; but Bismarck seems to have distrusted him and to have dismissed him curtly. The adventuress, Mme. Humbert, recently claimed that she had her "millions" from this Regnier. A sharp criticism on Bazaine's conduct at Metz is given in a pamphlet, *Réponse au Rapport sommaire sur les Opérations de l'Armée du Rhin*, by one of his staff officers. See, too, M. Samuel Denis in his recent work, *Histoire contemporaine* (de France).

public. The last effort was made by Bourbaki and a large but ill-compacted army against the enemy's communications in Alsace. By a speedy concentration the Germans at Héricourt, near Belfort, defeated this daring move (imposed by the Government of National Defence on Bourbaki against his better judgment), and compelled him and his hard-pressed followers to pass over into Switzerland (January 30, 1871).

Meanwhile Paris had already surrendered. During 130 days, and that, too, in a winter of unusual severity, the great city had held out with a courage that neither defeats, schisms, dearth of food, nor the bombardment directed against its southern quarters could overcome. Towards the close of January famine stared the defenders in the face, and on the 28th an armistice was concluded, which put an end to the war except in the neighbourhood of Belfort. That exception was due to the determination of the Germans to press Bourbaki hard, while the French negotiators were not aware of his plight. The garrison of Paris, except 12,000 men charged with the duty of keeping order, surrendered; the forts were placed in the besiegers' hands. When that was done the city was to be revictualled and thereafter pay a war contribution of 200,000,000 francs (£8,000,000). A National Assembly was to be freely elected and meet at Bordeaux to discuss the question of peace. The National Guards retained their arms, Favre maintaining that it would be impossible to disarm them; for this mistaken weakness he afterwards expressed his profound sorrow.[1]

[1] It of course led up to the Communist revolt. Bismarck's relations to the disorderly elements in Paris are not fully known; but he warned Favre on January 26th to "provoke an *émeute* while you

Despite the very natural protests of Gambetta and many others against the virtual ending of the war at the dictation of the Parisian authorities, the voice of France ratified their action. An overwhelming majority declared for peace. The young Republic had done wonders in reviving the national spirit: Frenchmen could once more feel the self-confidence which had been damped by the surrenders of Sedan and Metz; but the instinct of self-preservation now called imperiously for the ending of the hopeless struggle. In the hurried preparations for the elections held on February 8th, few questions were asked of the candidates except that of peace or war; and it soon appeared that a great majority were in favour of peace, even at the cost of part of the eastern provinces.

Of the 630 deputies who met at Bordeaux on February 12th, fully 400 were Monarchists, nearly evenly divided between the Legitimists and Orleanists; 200 were professed Republicans; but only 30 Bonapartists were returned. It is not surprising that the Assembly, which met in the middle of February, should soon have declared that the Napoleonic Empire had ceased to exist, as being "responsible for the ruin, invasion, and dismemberment of the country" (March 1st). These rather exaggerated charges (against which Napoleon III. protested from his place of exile, Chiselhurst) were natural in the then deplorable condition of France. What is surprising and needs a brief explanation here, is the fact that a monarchical Assembly should have allowed the Republic to be founded.

This paradoxical result sprang from several causes, some

have an army to suppress it with" (*Bismarck in the Franco-German War*, ii., p. 265).

of them of a general nature, others due to party considerations, while the personal influence of one man perhaps turned the balance at this crisis in the history of France. We will consider them in the order here named.

Stating the matter broadly, we may say that the present Assembly was not competent to decide on the future constitution of France; and that vague but powerful instinct, which guides representative bodies in such cases, told against any avowedly partisan effort in that direction. The deputies were fully aware that they were elected to decide the urgent question of peace or war; either to rescue France from her long agony or to pledge the last drops of her life-blood in an affair of honour. By an instinct of self-preservation, the electors, especially in the country districts, turned to the men of property and local influence as those who were most likely to save them from the frothy followers of Gambetta. Accordingly, local magnates were preferred to the barristers and pressmen whose oratorical and literary gifts usually carry the day in France; and more than two hundred noblemen were elected. They were not chosen on account of their nobility and royalism, but because they were certain to vote against the *fou furieux*.

Then, too, the royalists knew very well that time would be required to accustom France to the idea of a King, and to adjust the keen rivalries between the older and the younger branches of the Bourbon House. Furthermore, they were anxious that the odium of signing a disastrous peace should fall on the young Republic, not on the monarch of the future. Just as the great Napoleon in 1804 was undoubtedly glad that the giving up of Belgium and the Rhine boundary should devolve on his successor, Louis XVIII., and counted on that as one of the causes

undermining the restored monarchy, so now the royalists intended to leave the disagreeable duty of ceding the eastern districts of France to the Republicans who had so persistently prolonged the struggle. The clamour of no small section of the Republican party for war *à outrance* still played into the hands of the royalists and partly justified this narrow partisanship. Events, however, were to prove here, as in so many cases, that the party which undertook a pressing duty and discharged it manfully gained more in the end than those who shirked responsibility and left the conduct of affairs to their opponents. Men admire those who dauntlessly pluck the flower safety out of the nettle danger.

Finally, the influence of one commanding personality was ultimately to be given to the cause of the Republic. That strange instinct which in times of crisis turns the gaze of a people towards the one necessary man, now singled out M. Thiers. The veteran statesman was elected in twenty-six departments. Gambetta and General Trochu, Governor of Paris, were each elected nine times over. It was clear that the popular voice was for the policy of statesmanlike moderation which Thiers now summed up in his person; and Gambetta for a time retired to Spain.

The name of Thiers had not always stood for moderation. From the time of his youth, when his journalistic criticisms on the politics, literature, art, and drama of the Restoration period set all tongues wagging, to the day when his many-sided gifts bore him to power under Louis Philippe, he stood for all that is most beloved by the vivacious sons of France. His early work, *The History of the French Revolution*, had endeared him to the survivors of the old Jacobin and Girondin parties, and his eager hostility to

England during his term of office flattered the Chauvinist feelings that steadily grew in volume during the otherwise dull reign of Louis Philippe. In the main, Thiers was an upholder of the Orleans dynasty, yet his devotion to constitutional principles, the ardour of his southern temperament—he was a Marseillais by birth—and the vivacious egotism that never brooked contradiction, often caused sharp friction with the King and the King's friends. He seemed born for opposition and criticism. Thereafter, his conduct of affairs helped to undermine the fabric of the Second Republic (1848–51). Flung into prison by the minions of Louis Napoleon at the time of the *coup d'état*, he emerged buoyant as ever, and took up again the rôle that he loved so well.

Nevertheless, amidst all the seeming vagaries of Thiers's conduct there emerge two governing principles—a passionate love of France, and a sincere attachment to reasoned liberty. The first was absolute and unchangeable; the second admitted of some variations if the ruler did not enhance the glory of France, and also (as some cynics said) recognise the greatness of M. Thiers. For the many gibes to which his lively talents and successful career exposed him, he had his revenge. His keen glance and incisive reasoning generally warned him of the probable fate of dynasties and ministries. Like Talleyrand, whom he somewhat resembled in versatility, opportunism, and undying love of France, he might have said that he never deserted a government before it deserted itself. He foretold the fall of Louis Philippe under the reactionary Guizot Ministry as, later on, he foretold the fall of Napoleon III. He blamed the Emperor for not making war on Prussia in 1866 with the same unanswerable logic that

marked his opposition to the mad rush for war in 1870. And yet the war spirit had been in some sense strengthened by his own writings. His great work, *The History of the Consulate and Empire*, which appeared from 1845 to 1862, —the last eight volumes came out during the Second Empire,—was in the main a glorification of the first Napoleon. Men therefore asked with some impatience why the panegyrist of the uncle should oppose the supremacy of the nephew; and the action of the crowd in smashing the historian's windows after his great speech against the War of 1870 cannot be called wholly illogical, even if it erred on the side of Gallic vivacity.

In the feverish drama of French politics Time sometimes brings an appropriate Nemesis. It was so now. The man who had divided the energies of his manhood between parliamentary opposition of a somewhat factious type and the literary cultivation of the Napoleonic legend, was now, in the evening of his days, called upon to bear a crushing load of responsibility in struggling to win the best possible terms of peace from the victorious Teuton, in mediating between contending factions at Bordeaux and Paris, and finally, in founding a form of government which never enlisted his whole-hearted sympathy, save as the least objectionable expedient then open to France.

For the present, the great thing was to gain peace with the minimum of sacrifice for France. Who could drive a better bargain than Thiers, the man who knew France so well, and had recently felt the pulse of the Governments of Europe? Accordingly, on the 17th of February, the Assembly named him head of the executive power "until it is based upon the French constitution." He declined to accept this post until the words "of the French Repub-

lic" were substituted for the latter clause. He had every reason for urging this demand. Unlike the Republic of 1848, the strength of which was chiefly, or almost solely, in Paris, the Republic was proclaimed at Lyons, Marseilles, and Bordeaux, before any news came of the overthrow of the Napoleonic dynasty at the capital.[1]

He now entrusted three important portfolios, those for Foreign Affairs, Home Affairs, and Public Instruction, to pronounced Republicans—Jules Favre, Picard, and Jules Simon. Having pacified the monarchical majority by appealing to them to defer all questions respecting the future constitution until affairs were more settled, he set out to meet Bismarck at Versailles.

A disadvantage which almost necessarily besets parliamentary institutions had weakened the French case before the negotiations began. The composition of the Assembly implied a strong desire for peace, a fact which Thiers had needlessly emphasised before he left Bordeaux. On the other hand, Bismarck was anxious to end the war. He knew enough to be uneasy at the attitude of the neutral States; for public opinion was veering round in England, Austria, and Italy to a feeling of keen sympathy for France, and even Russia was restless at the sight of the great military Empire that had sprung into being on her flank. The recent proclamation of the German Empire at Versailles—an event that will be treated in a later chapter—opened up a vista of great developments for the Fatherland, not unmixed with difficulties and dangers. Above all, sharp differences had arisen between him and the military men at the German headquarters, who wished

[1] Seignobos, *A Political History of Contemporary Europe*, i., p. 187 (Eng. edit.).

to "bleed France white" by taking a large portion of French Lorraine (including its capital, Nancy), a few colonies, and part of her fleet. It is now known that Bismarck, with the same moderation that he displayed after Königgrätz, opposed these extreme claims, and he even doubted the advisability of keeping Metz, with its large French population. The words in which he let fall these thoughts while at dinner with Busch on February 21st deserve to be quoted:

"If they [the French] gave us a milliard[1] more (£40,000,000) we might perhaps let them have Metz. We would then take 800,000,000 francs, and build ourselves a fortress a few miles farther back, somewhere about Falkenberg or Saarbrück—there must be some suitable spot thereabouts. We should thus make a clear profit of 200,000,000 francs. I do not like so many Frenchmen being in our house against their will. It is just the same with Belfort. It is all French there, too. The military men, however, will not be willing to let Metz slip, and perhaps they are right."[2]

A sharp difference of opinion had arisen between Bismarck and Moltke on this question, and Emperor Wilhelm intervened in favour of Moltke. That decided the question of Metz against Thiers despite his threat that this might lead to a renewal of war. For Belfort, however, the French statesman made a supreme effort. That fortress holds a most important position. Strong in itself, it stands as sentinel guarding the gap of nearly level ground between the spurs of the Vosges and those of the Jura. If that virgin stronghold were handed over to Germany, she

[1] A milliard = 1,000,000,000 francs.

[2] Busch, *Bismarck in the Franco-German War*, ii., 341.

would be able easily to pour her legions down the valley of the Doubs and dominate the rich districts of Burgundy and the Lyonnais. Besides, military honour required France to keep a fortress that had kept the tricolour flying. Metz the Germans held, and it was impossible to turn them out. Obviously the case of Belfort was on a different footing. In his conference of February 24th, Thiers at last defied Bismarck in these words: "No; I will never yield Belfort and Metz in the same breath. You wish to ruin France in her finances, in her frontiers. Well! Take her. Conduct her administration, collect her revenues, and you will have to govern her in the face of Europe—if Europe permits." [1]

Probably this defiance had less weight with the Iron Chancellor than his conviction, noticed above, that to bring two entirely French towns within the German Empire would prove a source of weakness; beside which, his own motto, *Beati possidentes*, told with effect in the case of Belfort. That stronghold was accordingly saved for France. Thiers also obtained a reduction of a milliard from the impossible sum of six milliards first named for the war indemnity due to Germany; in this matter Jules Favre states that British mediation had been of some avail. If so, it partly accounts for the hatred of England which Bismarck displayed in his later years. The preliminaries of peace were signed at Versailles on February 26th.

One other matter remained. The Germans insisted that, if Belfort remained to France, part of their army should enter Paris. In vain did Thiers and Jules Favre point out

[1] G. Hanotaux, *Contemporary France*, i., p. 124 (Eng. edit.). This work is the most detailed and authoritative that has yet appeared on these topics. See, too, M. Samuel Denis's work, *Histoire contemporaine*.

the irritation that this would cause and the possible ensuing danger. The German Emperor and his staff made it a point of honour, and 30,000 of their troops accordingly marched in and occupied for a brief space the district of the Champs Élysées. The terms of peace were finally ratified in the Treaty of Frankfurt (May 10, 1871), whereby France ceded Alsace and part of Lorraine, with a population of some 1,600,000 souls, and underwent the other losses noted above. Last but not least was the burden of supporting the German army of occupation that kept its grip on the north-east of France until, as the instalments came in, the foreign troops were proportionately drawn away eastwards. The magnitude of these losses and burdens had already aroused cries of anguish in France. The National Assembly at Bordeaux, on first hearing the terms, passionately confirmed the deposition of Napoleon III.; while the deputies from the ceded districts lodged a solemn protest against their expatriation (March 1st). Some of the advanced Republican deputies, refusing to acknowledge the cession of territory, resigned their seats in the Assembly. Thus there began a schism between the Radicals, especially those of Paris, and the Assembly which was destined to widen into an impassable gulf. Matters were made worse by the decision of the Assembly to sit, not at the capital, but at Versailles, where it would be free from the commotions of the great city. Thiers himself declared in favour of Versailles; there the Assembly met on March 20, 1871.

A conflict between this monarchical assembly and the eager Radicals of Paris perhaps lay in the nature of things. The majority of the deputies looked forward to the return of the King (whether the Comte de Chambord of the elder

Bourbons, or the Comte de Paris of the House of Orleans) as soon as France should be freed from the German armies of occupation and the spectre of the Red Terror. Some of their more impatient members openly showed their hand, and while at Bordeaux began to upbraid Thiers for his obstinate neutrality on this question. For his part, the wise old man had early seen the need of keeping the parties in check. On February 17th he begged them to defer questions as to the future form of government, working meanwhile solely for the present needs of France, and allowing future victory to be the meed of that party which showed itself most worthy of trust. "Can there be any man," he exclaimed, "who would dare learnedly to discuss the articles of the Constitution, while our prisoners are dying of misery far away, or while our people, perishing of hunger, are obliged to give their last crust to the foreign soldiers?" A similar appeal in March led to the informal truce on constitutional questions known as the Compact of Bordeaux. It was at best an uncertain truce, certain to be broken at the first sign of activity on the Republican side.

That activity was now put forth by the "reds" of Paris. It would take us far too long to describe the origins of the municipal socialism which took form in the Parisian Commune of 1871. The first seeds of that movement had been sown by its prototype of 1792–93, which summed up all the daring and vigour of the revolutionary socialism of that age. The idea had been kept alive by the "National Workshops" of 1848, whose institution and final suppression by the young Republic of that year had been its own undoing.

History shows, then, that Paris, as the head of France,

was accustomed to think and act vigorously for herself in time of revolution. But experience proved no less plainly that the limbs, that is, the country districts, generally refused to follow the head in these fantastic movements. Hence, after a short spell of St. Vitus' activity, there always came a time of strife, followed only too often by torpor, when the body reduced the head to a state of benumbed subjection. The triumph of rural notions accounts for the reactions of 1831–47, and 1851–70. Paris, having once more regained freedom of movement by the fall of the Second Empire on September 4th, at once sought to begin her politico-social experiments, and, as we pointed out, only the promptitude of the "moderates," when face to face with the advancing Germans, averted the catastrophe of a socialistic *régime* in Paris during the siege. Even so, the Communists made two determined efforts to gain power: the former of these, on October 31st, nearly succeeded. Other towns in the Centre and South, notably Lyons, were also on the brink of revolutionary socialism, and the success of the movement in Paris might conceivably have led to a widespread trial of the communal experiment. The war helped to keep matters in the old lines.

But now, the feelings of rage at the surrender of Paris and the cession of the eastern districts of France, together with hatred of the monarchical assembly, that flouted the capital by sitting at the abode of the old Kings of France, served to raise popular passion to fever heat. The Assembly undoubtedly made many mistakes: it authorised the payment of rents and all other obligations in the capital for the period of siege as if in ordinary times, and it appointed an unpopular man to command the National

Guards of Paris. At the close of February the National Guards formed a central committee to look after their interests and those of the capital; and when the Executive of the State sent troops of the line to seize their guns parked on Montmartre, the Nationals and the rabble turned out in force. The troops refused to act against the National Guards, and these murdered two Generals, Lecomte and Thomas (March 18th). Thiers and his ministers thereupon rather tamely retired to Versailles, and the capital fell into the hands of the Communists. Greater firmness at the outset might have averted the horrors that followed.

The Communists speedily consulted the voice of the people by elections conducted in the most democratic spirit. In many respects their programme of municipal reforms marked a great improvement on the type of town-government prevalent during the Empire. That was, practically, under the control of the imperial *préfets*. The Communists now asserted the right of each town to complete self-government, with the control of its officials, magistrates, National Guards, and police, as well as of taxation, education, and many other spheres of activity. The more ambitious minds looked forward to a time when France would form a federation of self-governing Communes, whose delegates, deciding matters of national concern, would reduce the executive power to complete subservience. At bottom this communal federalism was the ideal of Rousseau and of his ideal Cantonal State.

By such means, they hoped, the brain of France would control the body, the rural population inevitably taking the position of hewers of wood and drawers of water, both in a political and material sense. Undoubtedly the Paris

Commune made some intelligent changes which pointed the way to reforms of lasting benefit; but it is very questionable whether its aims could have achieved permanence in a land so very largely agricultural as France then was. Certainly it started its experiment in the worst possible way, namely, by defying the constituted authorities of the nation at large, and by adopting the old revolutionary calendar and the red flag, the symbol of social revolution. Thenceforth it was an affair of war to the knife.

The National Government, sitting at Versailles, could not at first act with much vigour. Many of the line regiments sympathised with the National Guards of Paris: these were 200,000 strong, and had command of the walls and some of the posts to the south-west of Paris. The Germans still held the forts to the north and east of the capital, and refused to allow any attack on that side. It has even been stated that Bismarck favoured the Communists; but this is said to have resulted from their misreading of his promise to maintain a *friedlich* (peaceful) attitude as if it were *freundlich* (friendly).[1] The full truth as to Bismarck's relations to the Commune is not known. The Germans, however, sent back a force of French prisoners, and these with other troops, after beating back the Communist sortie of April 3rd, began to threaten the defences of the city. The strife at once took on a savage character, as was inevitable after the murder of two Generals in Paris. The Versailles troops, treating the Communists as mere rebels, shot their chief officers. Thereupon the Commune retaliated by ordering the capture of hostages, and by seizing the Archbishop of Paris, and several other ecclesiastics (April 5th). It also decreed

[1] Débidour, *Histoire diplomatique de l'Europe*, ii., pp. 438–440.

the abolition of the budget for public worship and the confiscation of clerical and monastic property *throughout France*—a proposal which aroused ridicule and contempt.

It would be tedious to dwell on the details of this terrible strife. Gradually the regular forces overpowered the National Guards of Paris, drove them from the southern forts, and finally (May 21st) gained a lodgment within the walls of Paris at the Auteuil gate. Then followed a week of street-fighting and madness such as Europe had not seen since the Peninsular War. "Room for the people, for the bare-armed fighting men. The hour of the revolutionary war has struck." This was the placard posted throughout Paris on the 22nd, by order of the Communist chief, Delescluze. And again, "After the barricades, our houses; after our houses, our ruins." Preparations were made to burn down a part of Central Paris to delay the progress of the Versaillese. Rumour magnified this into a plan of wholesale incendiarism, and wild stories were told of *pétroleuses* flinging oil over buildings, and of Communist firemen ready to pump petroleum. A squad of infuriated "reds" rushed off and massacred the Archbishop of Paris and six other hostages, while elsewhere Dominican friars, captured regulars, and police agents fell victims to the rage of the worsted party.

Madness seemed to have seized on the women of Paris. Even when the men were driven from barricades by weight of numbers or by the capture of houses on their flank, these creatures fought on with the fury of despair till they met the death which the enraged linesmen dealt out to all who fought, or seemed to have fought. Simpson, the British war correspondent, tells how he saw a brutal officer tear the red cross off the arm of a nurse who tended the

Communist wounded, so that she might be done to death as a fighter.[1] Both sides, in truth, were infuriated by the long and murderous struggle, which showed once again that no strife is so horrible as that of civil war. On Sunday, May 28th, the last desperate band was cut down at the Cemetery Père-Lachaise, and fighting gave way to fusillades. Most of the chiefs perished without the pretence of trial, and the same fate befell thousands of National Guards, who were mown down in swathes and cast into trenches. In the last day of fighting, and the terrible time that followed, 17,000 Parisians are said to have perished.[2] Little by little, law reasserted her sway, but only to doom 9600 persons to heavy punishment. Not until 1879 did feelings of mercy prevail, and then, owing to Gambetta's powerful pleading, an amnesty was passed for the surviving Communist prisoners.

The Paris Commune affords the last important instance of a determined rising in Europe against a civilised Government. From this statement we of course except the fitful efforts of the Carlists in Spain; and it is needless to say that the risings of the Bulgarians and other Slavs against Turkish rule have been directed against an uncivilised Government. The absence of revolts in the present age marks it off from all that have preceded, and seems to call for a brief explanation. Obviously, there is no lack of discontent, as the sequel will show. Finland, portions of Caucasia, and all the parts of the once mighty realm of Poland which have fallen to Russia and Prussia, now and

[1] *The Autobiography of William Simpson* (London, 1903), p. 261.

[2] G. Hanotaux, *Contemporary France*, p. 225. For further details see Lissagaray's *History of the Commune;* also personal details in Washburne's *Recollections of a Minister to France*, 1869–77, ii., chaps. ii.–vii.

again heave with anger and resentment. But these feelings are suppressed. They do not flame forth, as was the case of Poland as late as the year 1863. What is the reason for this? Mainly, it would seem, the enormous powers given to the modern organised State by the discoveries of mechanical science and the triumphs of the engineer. Telegraphy now flashes to the capital the news of a threatening revolt in the hundredth part of the time formerly taken by couriers with their relays of horses. Fully as great is the saving of time in the transport of large bodies of troops to the disaffected districts. Thus, the all-important factors that make for success—force, skill, and time—are all on the side of the central Governments.[1]

The spread of constitutional rule has also helped to dispel discontent—or, at least, has altered its character. Representative government has tended to withdraw disaffection from the market-place, the purlieus of the poor, and the fastnesses of the forest, and to focus it noisily but peacefully in the columns of the Press and the arena of Parliament. The appeal now is not so much to arms as to argument; and in this new sphere a minority, provided that it is well organised and persistent, may generally hope to attain its ends. Revolt, even if it take the form of a refusal to pay taxes, is therefore an anachronism under a democracy; unless, as in the case of the American Civil War, two great sections of the country are irreconcilably opposed.

The fact, however, that there has been no widespread revolt in Russia since the year 1863, shows that democracy

[1] See *Turkey in Europe*, by "Odysseus" (p. 130), for the parallel instance of the enhanced power of the Sultan Abdul Hamid owing to the same causes.

has not been the chief influence tending to dissolve or suppress discontent. As we shall see in a later chapter, Russia has defied constitutionalism and ground down alien races and creeds; yet (up to the year 1904) no great rising has shaken her autocratic system to its base. This seems to prove that the immunity of the present age in regard to insurrections is due rather to the triumphs of mechanical science than to the progress of democracy. The fact is not pleasing to contemplate; but it must be faced. So also must its natural corollary that the minority, if rendered desperate, may be driven to arm itself with new and terrible engines of destruction in order to shatter that superiority of force with which science has endowed the centralised Governments of to-day.

Certain it is that desperation, perhaps brought about by a sense of helplessness in face of an armed nation, was one of the characteristics of the Paris Commune, as it was also of Nihilism in Russia. In fact the Communist effort of 1871 may be termed a belated attempt on the part of a daring minority to dominate France by seizing the machinery of government at Paris. The success of the Extremists of 1793 and 1848 in similar experiments—not to speak of the communistic rising of Babeuf in 1797—was only temporary; but doubtless it encouraged the "reds" of 1781 to make their mad bid for power. Now, however, the case was very different. France was no longer a lethargic mass, dominated solely by the eager brain of Paris. The whole country thrilled with political life. For the time, the Provinces held the directing power, which had been necessarily removed from the capital; and—most powerful motive of all—they looked on the Parisian experiment as gross treason to *la patrie*, while she lay at the

feet of the Germans. Thus, the very motives which for a space lent such prestige and power to the Communistic Jacobins of 1793 told against their imitators in 1871.

The inmost details of their attempt will perhaps never be fully known; for too many of the actors died under the ruins of the building they had so heedlessly reared. Nevertheless, it is clear that the Commune was far from being the causeless outburst that it has often been represented. In part it resulted from the determination of the capital to free herself from the control of the "rurals" who dominated the National Assembly; and in that respect it foreshadowed, however crudely, what will probably be the political future of all great States, wherein the urban population promises altogether to outweigh and control that of the country. Further, it should be remembered that the experimenters of 1871 believed the Assembly to have betrayed the cause of France by ceding her eastern districts, and to be on the point of handing over the Republic to the monarchists. A fit of hysteria, or hypochondria, brought on by the exhausting siege and by exasperation at the triumphal entry of the Germans, added the touch of fury which enabled the Radicals of Paris to challenge the national authorities and thereafter to persist in their defiance with French logicality and ardour.

France, on the other hand, looked on the Communist movement at Paris and in the southern towns as treason to the cause of national unity, when there was the utmost need of concord. Thus on both sides there were deplorable misunderstandings. In ordinary times they might have been cleared away by frank explanations between the more moderate leaders; but the feverish state of the

public mind forbade all thoughts of compromise, and the very weakness brought on by the war sharpened the fit of delirium which will render the spring months of the year 1871 for ever memorable even in the thrilling annals of Paris.

CHAPTER V

THE FOUNDING OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC (*continued*)

THE seemingly suicidal energy shown in the civil strifes at Paris served still further to depress the fortunes of France. On the very day when the Versailles troops entered the walls of Paris, Thiers and Favre signed the treaty of peace at Frankfurt. The terms were substantially those agreed on in the preliminaries of February, but the conditions of payment of the indemnity were harder than before. Resistance was hopeless. In truth, the Iron Chancellor had recently used very threatening language: he accused the French Government of bad faith in procuring the release of a large force of French prisoners, ostensibly for the overthrow of the Commune, but really in order to patch up matters with the "reds" of Paris and renew the war with Germany. Misrepresentations and threats like these induced Thiers and Favre to agree to the German demands, which took form in the Treaty of Frankfurt (May 10, 1871).

Peace having been duly ratified on those hard terms,[1] it

[1] They included the right to hold four more Departments until the third half-milliard (£20,000,000, that is, £60,000,000 in all) had been paid. A commercial treaty on favourable terms, those of the "most favoured nation," was arranged, as also an exchange of frontier strips near Luxemburg and Belfort. Germany acquired Elsass (Alsace) and part of Lorraine, free of all their debts.

We may note here that the Anglo-French Treaty of Commerce,

remained to build up France almost *de novo*. Nearly everything was wanting. The treasury was nearly empty, and that too in face of the enormous demands made by Germany. It is said that in February, 1871, the unhappy man who took up the Ministry of Finance, carried away all the funds of the national exchequer in his hat. As Thiers confessed to the Assembly, he had, for very patriotism, to close his eyes to the future and grapple with the problems of every day as they arose. But he had faith in France, and France had faith in him. The French people can perform wonders when they thoroughly trust their rulers. The inexhaustible wealth inherent in their soil, the thrift of the peasantry, and the self-sacrificing ardour shown by the nation when nerved by a high ideal, constituted an asset of unsuspected strength in face of the staggering blows dealt to French wealth and credit. The losses caused by the war, the Commune, and the cession of the eastern districts, involved losses that have been reckoned at more than £614,000,000. Apart from the 1,597,000 inhabitants transferred to German rule, the loss of population due to the war and the civil strifes has been put as high as 491,000 souls.[1]

Yet France flung herself with triumphant energy into the task of paying off the invaders. At the close of June, 1871, a loan for two milliards and a quarter (£90,000,000) was opened for subscription, and proved to be an immense

arranged in 1860 with Napoleon largely by the aid of Cobden, was not renewed by the French Republic, which thereafter began to exclude British goods. Bismarck forced France at Frankfurt to concede favourable terms to German products. England was helpless. For this subject, see *Protection in France*, by H. O. Meredith (1905).

[1] Quoted by M. Hanotaux, *Contemporary France*, i., pp. 323–327.

success. The required amount was more than doubled. By means of the help of international banks, the first half milliard of the debt was paid off in July, 1871, and Normandy was freed from the burden of German occupation. We need not detail the dates of the successive payments. They revealed the unsuspected vitality of France and the energy of her Government and financiers. In March, 1873, the arrangements for the payment of the last instalment were made, and in the autumn of that year the last German troops left Verdun and Belfort. For his great services in bending all the powers of France to this great financial feat, Thiers was universally acclaimed as the Liberator of the Territory.

Yet that very same period saw him overthrown. To read this riddle aright, we must review the outlines of French internal politics. We have already referred to the causes that sent up a monarchical majority to the National Assembly, the schisms that weakened the action of that majority, and the peculiar position held by M. Thiers, an Orleanist in theory, but the chief magistrate of the French Republic. No more paradoxical situation has ever existed; and its oddity was enhanced by the usually clear-cut logicality of French political thought. Now, after the war and the Commune, the outlook was dim, even to the keenest sight. One thing alone was clear, the duty of all citizens to defer raising any burning question until law, order, and the national finances were re-established. It was the perception of this truth that led to the provisional truce between the parties known as the Compact of Bordeaux. Flagrantly broken by the "reds" of Paris in the spring of 1871, that agreement seemed doomed. The Republic itself was in danger of perishing as it did

after the socialistic extravagances of the Revolution of 1848. But Thiers at once disappointed the monarchists by stoutly declaring that he would not abet the overthrow of the Republic: "We found the Republic established, as a fact of which we are not the authors; but I will not destroy the form of government which I am now using to restore order. . . . When all is settled, the country will have the liberty to choose as it pleases in what concerns its future destinies."[1] Skilfully pointing the factions to the future as offering a final reward for their virtuous self-restraint, this masterly tactician gained time in which to heal the worst wounds dealt by the war.

But it was amidst unending difficulties. The monarchists, eager to emphasise the political reaction set in motion by the extravagances of the Paris Commune, wished to rid themselves at the earliest possible time of this self-confident little bourgeois who alone seemed to stand between them and the realisation of their hopes. Their more unscrupulous members belittled his services and hinted that love of power alone led him to cling to the Republic, and thus belie his political past. Then, too, the Orleans princes, the Duc d'Aumale and the Prince de Joinville, the surviving sons of King Louis Philippe, took their seats as deputies for the Oise and Haute-Marne Departments, thus keeping the monarchical ideal steadily before the eye of France. True, the Duc d'Aumale had declared to the electorate that he was ready to bow before the will of France whether it decided for a Constitutional Monarchy or a Liberal Republic; and the loyalty with which he served his country was destined to set the seal of honesty on a singularly interesting career. But there was

[1] Speech of March 27, 1871.

no guarantee that the Chamber would not take upon itself to interpret the will of France and call from his place of exile in London the Comte de Paris, son of the eldest descendant of Louis Philippe, around whom the hopes of the Orleanists centred.

Had Thiers followed his earlier convictions and declared for such a Restoration, it might quite conceivably have come about without very much resistance. But early in the year 1871, or perhaps after the fall of the Empire, he became convinced that France could not heal her grievous wounds except under a government that had its roots deep in the people's life. Now, the cause of monarchy in France was hopelessly weakened by schisms. Legitimists and Orleanists were at feud ever since, in 1830, Louis Philippe, so the former said, cozened the rightful heir out of his inheritance; and the efforts now made to fuse the claims of the two rival branches remained without result owing to the stiff and dogmatic attitude of the Comte de Chambord, heir to the traditions of the elder branch. A Bonapartist Restoration was out of the question. Yet all three sections began more and more to urge their claims. Thiers met them with consummate skill. Occasionally they had reason to resent his tactics as showing unworthy finesse; but oftener they quailed before the startling boldness of his reminders that, as they constituted the majority of the deputies of France, they might at once undertake to restore the monarchy—if they could. "You do not, and you cannot, do so. There is only one throne and it cannot have three occupants."[1] Or, again, he cowed them by

[1] De Mazade, *Thiers*, p. 467. For a sharp criticism of Thiers, see Samuel Denis's *Histoire Contemporaine* (written from the royalist standpoint).

the sheer force of his personality: "If I were a weak man, I would flatter you," he once exclaimed. In the last resort he replied to their hints of his ambition and self-seeking by offering his resignation. Here again the logic of facts was with him. For many months he was the necessary man, and he and they knew it.

But, as we have seen, there came a time when the last hard bargains with Bismarck as to the payment of the war debt neared their end; and the rapier-play between the Liberator of the Territory and the parties of the Assembly also drew to a close. In one matter he had given them just cause for complaint. As far back as November 13, 1872 (that is, before the financial problem was solved), he suddenly and without provocation declared from the tribune of the National Assembly that it was time to establish the Republic. The proposal was adjourned, but Thiers had damaged his influence. He had broken the Compact of Bordeaux and had shown his hand. The Assembly now knew that he was a Republican. Finally, he made a dignified speech to the Assembly, justifying his conduct in the past, appealing from the verdict of parties to the impartial tribunal of History, and prophesying that the welfare of France was bound up with the maintenance of the conservative Republic. The Assembly by a majority of fourteen decided on a course of action that he disapproved, and he therefore resigned (May 24, 1873).

It seems that History will justify his appeal to her tribunal. Looking, not at the occasional shifts that he used in order to disunite his opponents, but rather at the underlying motives that prompted his resolve to maintain that form of government which least divided his countrymen, posterity has praised his conduct as evincing keen

insight into the situation, a glowing love for France before which all his earliest predilections vanished, and a masterly skill in guiding her from the abyss of anarchy, civil war, and bankruptcy that had but recently yawned at her feet. Having set her upon the path of safety, he now betook himself once more to those historical and artistic studies which he loved better than power and office. It is given to few men not only to write history but also to make history; yet in both spheres Thiers achieved signal success. Some one has dubbed him "the greatest little man known to history." Granting even that the paradox is tenable, we may still assert that his influence on the life of France exceeded that of many of her so-called heroes.

In fact, it would be difficult to point out in any country during the nineteenth century, since the time of Bonaparte's Consulate, a work of political, economic, and social renovation greater than that which went on in the two years during which Thiers held the reins of power. Apart from the unparalleled feat of paying off the Germans, the Chief of the Executive breathed new vigour into the public service, revived national spirit in so noteworthy a way as to bring down threats of war from German military circles in 1872 (to be repeated more seriously in 1875), and placed on the Statute Book two measures of paramount importance. These were the reform of Local Government and the Army Bill.

These measures claim a brief notice. The former of them naturally falls into two parts, dealing severally with the Commune and the Department. These are the two all-important areas in French life. In rural districts the Commune corresponds to the English parish; it is the oldest and best-defined of all local areas. In urban

districts it corresponds with the municipality or township. The Revolutionists of 1790 and 1848 had sought to apply the principle of manhood suffrage to communal government; but their plans were swept away by the ensuing reactions, and the dawn of the Third Republic found the Communes, both rural and urban, under the control of the *préfets* and their subordinates. We must note here that the office of *préfet*, instituted by Bonaparte in 1800, was designed to link the local government of the Departments closely to the central power: this magistrate, appointed by the Executive at Paris, having almost unlimited control over local affairs throughout the several Departments. Indeed, it was against the excessive centralisation of the prefectorial system that the Parisian Communists made their heedless and unmeasured protest. The question having thus been thrust to the front, the Assembly brought forward (April, 1871) a measure authorising the election of Communal Councils elected by every adult man who had resided for a year in the Commune. A majority of the Assembly wished that the right of choosing mayors should rest with the Communal Councils, but Thiers, browbeating the deputies by his favourite device of threatening to resign, carried an amendment limiting this right to towns of less than 20,000 inhabitants. In the larger towns and in all capitals of Departments, the mayors were to be appointed by the central power. Thus the Napoleonic tradition in favour of keeping local government under the oversight of officials nominated from Paris was to some extent perpetuated even in an avowedly democratic measure.

Paris was to have a Municipal Council composed of eighty members elected by manhood suffrage from each ward; but the mayors of the twenty *arrondissements*, into which

Paris is divided, were, and still are, appointed by the State; and here again the control of the police and other extensive powers are vested in the *préfet* of the Department of the Seine, not in the mayors of the *arrondissements* or the Municipal Council. The Municipal or Communal Act of 1871, then, is a compromise, on the whole a good working compromise, between the extreme demands for local self-government and the Napoleonic tradition, now become an instinct with most Frenchmen in favour of central control over matters affecting public order.[1]

The matter of Army Reform was equally pressing. Here, again, Thiers had the ground cleared before him by a great overturn, like that which enabled Bonaparte in his day to remodel France, and the builders of modern Prussia, —Stein, Scharnhorst, and Hardenberg,—to build up their State from its ruins. In particular, the inefficiency of the National Guards and of the Garde Mobile made it easy to reconstruct the French army on the system of universal conscription in a regular army, the efficiency of which Prussia had so startlingly displayed in the campaigns of Königgrätz (Sadowa) and Sedan. Thiers, however, had no belief in a short-service system with its result of a huge force of imperfectly trained troops: he clung to the old professional army; and when that was shown to be inadequate to the needs of the new age, he pleaded that the period of compulsory service should be, not three, but five years. On the Assembly demurring to the expense and vital strain for the people which this implied, he declared with passionate emphasis that he would resign unless the

[1] On the strength of this instinct see Mr. Bodley's excellent work, *France*, i., pp. 32–42, etc. For the Act, see Hanotaux, *op. cit.*, pp. 236–238.

five years were voted. They were voted (June 10, 1872). At the same time, the exemptions, so numerous during the Second Empire, were curtailed and the right of buying a substitute was swept away. After five years' service with the active army, were to come four years with the reserve of the active army, followed by further terms in the territorial army. The favour of one year's service instead of five was to be accorded in certain well-defined cases, as, for instance, to those who had distinguished themselves at the *lycées*, or highest grade public schools. Such was the law which was published on July 27, 1872.[1]

The sight of a nation taking on itself this heavy blood-tax (heavier than that of Germany, where the time of service with the colours was only for three years), aroused universal surprise, which beyond the Rhine took the form of suspicion that France was planning a war of revenge. That feeling grew in intensity in military circles in Berlin three years later, as the sequel will show. Undaunted by the thinly veiled threats that came from Germany, France proceeded with the tasks of paying off her conquerors and reorganising her own forces; so that Thiers on his retirement from office could proudly point to the recovery of French credit and prestige after an unexampled overthrow.

In feverish haste, the monarchical majority of the National Assembly appointed Marshal MacMahon to the Presidency (May 24, 1873). They soon found out, however, the impossibility of founding a monarchy. The Comte de Paris, in whom the hopes of the Orleanists centred, went to the extreme of self-sacrifice, by visiting the Comte de Chambord, the Legitimist "King" of France, and recognising the validity of his claims to the throne. But

[1] Hanotaux, *op. cit.*, pp. 452–465.

this amiable pliability, while angering very many of the Orleanists, failed to move the monarch-designate by one hair's breadth from those principles of divine right against which the more liberal monarchists always protested. "Henri V." soon declared that he would neither accept any condition nor grant a single guarantee as to the character of his future rule. Above all, he declared that he would never give up the white flag of the *ancien régime*. In his eyes the tricolour, which shortly after the fall of the Bastile Louis XVI. had recognised as the flag of France, represented the spirit of the great Revolution, and for that great event he had the deepest loathing. As if still further to ruin his cause, the Count announced his intention of striving with all his might for the restoration of the Temporal Power of the Pope. It is said that the able Bishop of Orleans, Mgr. Dupanloup, on reading one of the letters by which the Comte de Chambord nailed the white flag to the mast, was driven to exclaim, "There! That makes the Republic! Poor France! All is lost."

Thus the attempts at fusion of the two monarchical parties had only served to expose the weaknesses of their position and to warn France of the probable results of a monarchical restoration. That the country had well learned the lesson appeared in the bye-elections, which in nearly every case went in favour of Republican candidates. Another event that happened early in 1873 further served to justify Thiers's contention that the Republic was the only possible form of government. On January 9th, Napoleon III. died of the internal disease which for seven years past had been undermining his strength. His son, the Prince Imperial, was at present far too young to figure as a claimant to the throne.

It is also an open secret that Bismarck worked hard to prevent all possibility of a royalist restoration; and when the German Ambassador at Paris, Count Arnim, opposed his wishes in this matter, he procured his recall and subjected him to a State prosecution. In fact, Bismarck believed that under a Republic France would be powerless in war, and, further, that she could never form that alliance with Russia which was the bugbear of his later days. A Russian diplomatist once told the Duc de Broglie that the kind of Republic which Bismarck wanted to see in France was *une République dissolvante*.

Everything therefore concurred to postpone the monarchical question, and to prolong the informal truce which Thiers had been the first to bring about. Accordingly, in the month of November, the Assembly extended the Presidency of Marshal MacMahon to seven years—a period therefore known as the Septennate.

Having now briefly shown the causes of the helplessness of the monarchical majority in the matter that it had most nearly at heart, we must pass over subsequent events save as they refer to that crowning paradox—the establishment of a Republican Constitution. This was due to the despair felt by many of the Orleanists of seeing a restoration during the lifetime of the Comte de Chambord, and to the alarm felt by all sections of the monarchists at the activity and partial success of the Bonapartists, who in the latter part of 1874 captured a few seats. Seeking above all things to keep out a Bonaparte, they did little to hinder the formation of a Constitution which all of them looked on as provisional. In fact, they adopted the policy of marking time until the death of the Comte de Chambord—whose

hold on life proved to be no less tenacious than on his creed—should clear up the situation. Accordingly, after many diplomatic delays, the Committee which in 1873 had been charged to draw up the Constitution, presented its plan, which took form in the organic laws of February 25, 1875. They may be thus summarised:

The Legislature consists of two Assemblies—the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, the former being elected by "universal" (or, more properly, *manhood*) suffrage. The composition of the Senate, as determined by a later law, lies with electoral bodies in each of the Departments; these bodies consist of the national deputies for that Department, the members of their General Councils and District Councils, and delegates from the Municipal Councils. Senators are elected for nine years; deputies to the Chamber of Deputies for four years. The President of the Republic is chosen by the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies sitting together for that purpose. He is chosen for seven years and is eligible for re-election; he is responsible to the Chambers only in case of high treason; he enjoys, conjointly with the members of the two Chambers, the right of proposing laws; he promulgates them when passed and supervises their execution; he disposes of the armed forces of France and has the right of pardon formerly vested in the Kings of France. Conformably to the advice of the Senate he may dissolve the Chamber of Deputies. Each Chamber may initiate proposals for laws, save that financial measures rest solely with the Chamber of Deputies.

The Chambers may decide that the Constitution shall be revised. In that case, they meet together, as a National Assembly, to carry out such revision, which is determined

by the bare majority. Each *arrondissement*, or district of a Department, elects one deputy. From 1885 to 1889 the elections were decided by each Department on a list, but since that time the earlier plan has been revived. We may also add that the seat of government was fixed at Versailles; four years later this was altered in favour of Paris, but certain of the most important functions, such as the election of a new President, take place at Versailles.

Taken as a whole, this Constitution was a clever compromise between the democratic and autocratic principles of government. Having its roots in manhood suffrage, it delegated very extensive powers to the head of the State. These powers are especially noteworthy if we compare them with those of the Ministry. The President commissions such and such a senator or deputy to form a Ministry (not necessarily representing the opinions of the majority of the Chambers); and that Ministry is responsible to the Chambers for the execution of laws and the general policy of the Government; but the President is not responsible to the Chambers, save in the single and very exceptional case of high treason to the State. Obviously, the Assembly wished to keep up the autocratic traditions of the past as well as to leave open the door for a revision of the Constitution in a sense favourable to the monarchical cause. That this Constitution did not pave the way for the monarchy was due to several causes. Some we have named above.

Another and perhaps a final cause was the unwillingness or inability of Marshal MacMahon to bring matters to the test of force. Actuated, perhaps, by motives similar to those which kept the Duke of Wellington from pushing

matters to an extreme in England in 1831, the Marshal refused to carry out a *coup d'état* against the Republican majority sent up to the Chamber of Deputies by the General Election of January, 1876. Once or twice he seemed on the point of using force. Thus, in May, 1877, he ventured to dissolve the Chamber of Deputies; but the Republican party, led by the impetuous Gambetta, appealed to the country with decisive results. That orator's defiant challenge to the Marshal, either to submit or to resign (*se soumettre ou se démettre*) was taken up by France, with the result that nearly all the Republican deputies were re-elected. The President recognised the inevitable, and in December of that year charged M. Dufaure to form a Ministry that represented the Republican majority. In January, 1879, even, some senatorial elections went against the President, and he accordingly resigned (January 30, 1879).

In the year 1887 the Republic seemed for a time to be in danger owing to the intrigues of the Minister for War, General Boulanger. Making capital out of the difficulties of France, the financial scandals brought home to President Grévy, and his own popularity with the army, the General seemed to be preparing a *coup d'état*. The danger increased when the Ministry had to resign office (May, 1887). A "National party" was formed, consisting of monarchists, Bonapartists, clericals, and even some crotchety socialists —in fact, of all who hoped to make capital out of the fall of the parliamentary *régime*. The malcontents called for a *plébiscite* as to the form of government, hoping by these means to thrust in Boulanger as dictator to pave the way for the Comte de Paris up to the throne of France. After a prolonged crisis, the scheme ignominiously collapsed at

the first show of vigour on the Republican side. When the new Floquet Ministry summoned Boulanger to appear before the High Court of Justice, he fled to Belgium, and shortly afterwards committed suicide.

The chief feature of French political life, if one reviews it in its broad outlines, is the increase of stability. When we remember that that veteran opportunist, Talleyrand, on taking the oath of allegiance to the new Constitution of 1830, could say: "It is the thirteenth," and that no *régime* after that period lasted longer than eighteen years, we shall be chary of foretelling the speedy overthrow of the Third Republic at any and every period of ministerial crisis or political ferment. Certainly the Republic has seen Ministries made and unmade in bewilderingly quick succession; but these are at most superficial changes—the real work of administration being done by the hierarchy of permanent officials first established by the great Napoleon. Even so terrible an event as the murder of President Sadi Carnot (June, 1894) produced none of the fatal events that British alarmists confidently predicted. M. Casimir Périer was quietly elected and ruled firmly. The same may be said of his successors, MM. Faure and Loubet. Sensible, business-like men of bourgeois origin, they typify the new France that has grown up since the age when military adventurers could keep their heels on her neck provided that they crowned her brow with laurels. That age would seem to have passed for ever away. A well-known adage says: "It is the unexpected that happens in French politics." To forecast their course is notoriously unsafe in that land of all lands. That careful and sagacious student of French life, Mr. Bodley, believes that the nation at heart dislikes the prudent tameness of Parliamentary

rule, and that "the day will come when no power will prevent France from hailing a hero of her choice." [1]

Doubtless the advent of a Napoleon the Great would severely test the qualities of prudence and patience that have gained strength under the shelter of democratic institutions. Yet it must always be remembered that Democracy has until now never had a fair chance in France. The bright hopes of 1789 faded away ten years later amidst the glamour of military glory. As for the Republic of 1848, it scarcely outlived the troubles of infancy. The Third Republic, on the other hand, has attained to manhood. It has met and overcome very many difficulties; at the outset parts of two valued provinces and a vast sum of treasure were torn away. In those early days of weakness it also crushed a serious revolt. The intrigues of monarchists and Bonapartists were foiled. Hardest task of all, the natural irritation of Frenchmen at playing a far smaller part in the world was little by little allayed.

In spite of these difficulties, the Third Republic has now lasted a quarter of a century. That is to say, it rests on the support of a generation which has gradually become accustomed to representative institutions—an advantage which its two predecessors did not enjoy. The success of institutions depends in the last resort on the character of those who work them; and the testimony of all observers is that the character of Frenchmen has slowly but surely changed in the direction which Thiers pointed out in the dark days of February, 1871, as offering the only means of a sound national revival—"Yes: I believe in the future of France: I believe in it, but on condition that we have good

[1] Mr. Bodley, *France*, i., *ad fin.*

sense; that we no longer use mere words as the current coin of our speech, but that under words we place realities; that we have not only good sense, but good sense endowed with courage."

These are the qualities that have built up the France of to-day. The toil has been enormous, and it has been doubled by the worries and disappointments incident to parliamentarism when grafted on to a semi-military bureaucracy; but the toil and the disappointments have played their part in purging the French nature of the frothy sensationalism and eager irresponsibility that naturally resulted from the imperialism of the two Napoleons. France seems to be outgrowing the stage of hobbledehoyish ventures, military or communistic, and to have taken on the staid, sober, and self-respecting mien of manhood—a process helped on by the burdens of debt and conscription resulting from her juvenile escapades. In a word, she has attained to a full sense of responsibility. No longer are her constructive powers hopelessly outmatched by her critical powers. In the political sphere she has found a due balance between the brain and the hand. From analysis she has worked her way to synthesis.

CHAPTER VI

THE GERMAN EMPIRE

"From the very beginning of my career my sole guiding-star has been how to unify Germany, and, that being achieved, how to strengthen, complete, and so constitute her unification that it may be preserved enduringly and with the goodwill of all concerned in it."—BISMARCK: Speech in the North German Reichstag, July 9, 1869.

ON the 18th of January, 1871, while the German cannon were still thundering against Paris, a ceremony of world-wide import occurred in the palace of the Kings of France at Versailles. King William of Prussia was proclaimed German Emperor. The scene lacked no element that could appeal to the historic imagination. It took place in the Mirror Hall, where all that was brilliant in the life of the old French monarchy used to encircle the person of Louis XIV. And now, long after that dynasty had passed away, and when the crown of the last of the Corsican adventurers had but recently fallen beneath the feet of the Parisians, the descendant of the Prussian Hohenzollerns celebrated the advent to the German people of that unity for which their patriots had vainly struggled for centuries.

The men who had won this long-deferred boon were of no common stamp. King William himself, as is now shown by the publication of many of his letters to Bismarck, had played a far larger share in the making of a united Germany

than was formerly believed. His plain good sense and unswerving fortitude had many times marked out the path of safety and kept his country therein. The policy of the Army Bill of 1860, which brought salvation to Prussia in spite of her Parliament, was wholly his. Bismarck's masterful grip of the helm of State in and after 1862 helped to carry out that policy, just as von Roon's organising ability perfected the resulting military machine; but its prime author was the King who now stood triumphant in the hall of his ancestral foes. Beside and behind him on the dais, in front of the colours of all the German States, were the chief princes of Germany—witnesses to the strength of the national sentiment which the wars against the First Napoleon had called forth and the struggle with the nephew had now brought to maturity. Among their figures one might note the stalwart form of the Crown Prince, along with other members of the House of Prussia; the Grand Duke of Baden, son-in-law of the Prussian King; the Crown Prince of Saxony, and representatives of every reigning family of Germany. Still more remarkable were some of the men grouped before the King and princes. There was the thin war-worn face of Moltke; there, too, the sturdy figure of Bismarck: the latter, wrote Dr. Russell, "looking pale, but calm and self-possessed, elevated, as it were, by some internal force." [1]

The King announced the re-establishment of the German Empire; and those around must have remembered that that venerable institution (which differed so widely from the present one that the word "re-establishment" was really misleading) had vanished but sixty-four years before at the behests of the First Napoleon. Next, Bismarck read

[1] Quoted by C. Lowe, *Life of Bismarck*, i., p. 615.

the Kaiser's proclamation, stating his sense of duty to the German nation and his hope that, within new and stronger boundaries, which would guarantee them against attacks from France, they would enjoy peace and prosperity. The Grand Duke of Baden then called for three cheers for the Emperor, which were given with wild enthusiasm, and were taken up by the troops far round the iron ring that encircled Paris.

Few events in history so much impress one, at first sight, with a sense of strength, spontaneity, and inevitableness. And yet, as more is known of the steps that led up to the closer union of the German States, that feeling is disagreeably warped. Even then it was known that Bavaria and Würtemberg strongly objected to the closer form of union desired by the Northern patriots, which would have reduced the secondary States to complete dependence on the Federal Government. Owing to the great reluctance of the Bavarian Government and people to give up the control of their railways, posts, and telegraphs, these were left at their disposal, the two other Southern States keeping the direction of the postal and telegraphic services in time of peace. Bavaria and Würtemberg likewise reserved the control of their armed forces, though in case of war they were to be placed at the disposal of the Emperor —arrangements which also hold good for the Saxon forces. In certain legal and fiscal matters Bavaria also bargained for freedom of action.

What was not known then, and has leaked out in more or less authentic ways, was the dislike, not only of most of the Bavarian people, but also of its Government, to the whole scheme of Imperial union. It is certain that the letter which King Louis finally wrote to his brother princes to

propose that union was originally drafted by Bismarck; and rumour asserts, on grounds not to be lightly dismissed, that the opposition of King Louis was not withdrawn until the Bavarian Court favourite, Count Holstein, came to Versailles and left it, not only with Bismarck's letter, but also with a considerable sum of money for his royal master and himself. Probably, however, the assent of the Bavarian monarch, who not many years after became insane, was helped by the knowledge that if he did not take the initiative, it would pass to the Grand Duke of Baden, an ardent champion of German unity.

Whatever may be the truth as to this, there can be no doubt as to the annoyance felt by Roman Catholic Bavaria and Protestant democratic Würtemberg at accepting the supremacy of the Prussian bureaucracy. This doubtless explains why Bismarck was so anxious to hurry through the negotiations, first, for the imperial union, and thereafter for the conclusion of peace with France.

Even in a seemingly small matter he had met with much opposition, this time from his master. The aged monarch clung to the title King of Prussia; but if the title of Emperor was a political necessity, he preferred the title "Emperor of Germany"; nevertheless, the Chancellor tactfully but firmly pointed out that this would imply a kind of feudal over-lordship of all German lands, and that the title "German Emperor," as that of chief of the nation, was far preferable. In the end the King yielded, but he retained a sore feeling against his trusted servant for some time on this matter. It seems that at one time he even thought of abdicating in favour of his son rather than "see the Prussian title supplanted." [1] However, he soon

[1] E. Marcks, *Kaiser Wilhelm I.* (Leipzig, 1900), pp. 337–343.

showed his gratitude for the immense services rendered by Bismarck to the Fatherland. On his next birthday (March 22) he raised the Chancellor to the rank of Prince and appointed him Chancellor of the Empire.

It will be well to give here an outline of the Imperial Constitution. In all essentials it was an extension, with few changes, of the North German federal compact of the year 1866. It applied to the twenty-five States of Germany—inclusive, that is, of Hamburg, Bremen, and Lubeck, but exclusive for the present, of Elsass-Lothringen (Alsace-Lorraine). In those areas Imperial law takes precedence of local law (save in a few specially reserved cases for Bavaria and the Free Cities). The same laws of citizenship hold good in all parts of the Empire. The Empire controls these laws, the issuing of passports, surveillance of foreigners and of manufactures, likewise matters relating to emigration and colonisation. Commerce, customs dues, weights and measures, coinage, banking regulations, patents, the consular service abroad, and matters relating to navigation also fall under its control. Railways, posts, and telegraphs (with the exceptions noted above) are subject to imperial supervision, the importance of which during the war had been so abundantly manifested.

The King of Prussia is *ipso facto* German Emperor. He represents the Empire among foreign nations; he has the right to declare war, conclude peace, and frame alliances; but the consent of the Federal Council (Bundesrath) is needed for the declaration of war in the name of the Empire. The Emperor convenes, adjourns, and closes the sessions of the Federal Council and the Imperial Diet (Reichstag). They are convened every year. The Chancellor of the Empire presides in the Federal Council and

supervises the conduct of its business. Proposals of laws are laid before the Reichstag in accordance with the resolutions of the Federal Council and are supported by members of that Council. To the Emperor belongs the right of preparing and publishing the laws of the Empire: they must be passed by the Bundesrath and Reichstag, and then receive the assent of the Kaiser. They are then countersigned by the Chancellor, who thereby becomes responsible for their due execution.

The members of the Bundesrath are appointed by the Federal Governments: they are sixty-two in number, and now include those from the Reichstand of Elsass-Lothringen (Alsace-Lorraine).[1]

The Prussian Government nominates seventeen members; Bavaria six; Saxony and Würtemberg and Alsace-Lorraine four each; and so on. The Bundesrath is presided over by the Imperial Chancellor. At the beginning of each yearly session it appoints eleven standing committees to deal with the following matters: (1) army and fortifications; (2) the navy; (3) tariff, excise, and taxes; (4) commerce and trade; (5) railways, posts, and telegraphs; (6) civil and criminal law; (7) financial accounts; (8) foreign affairs; (9) Alsace-Lorraine; (10) the Imperial Constitution; (11) Standing Orders. Each committee is presided over by a chairman. In each committee at least four States of the Empire must be represented, and each

[1] Up to 1874 the government of Alsace-Lorraine was vested solely in the Emperor and Chancellor. In 1874 the conquered lands returned deputies to the Reichstag. In October, 1879, they gained local representative institutions, but under the strict control of the Governor, Marshal von Manteuffel. This control has since been relaxed, the present administration being quasi-constitutional.

State is entitled to only one vote. To this rule there are two modifications in the case of the committees on the army and on foreign affairs. In the former of these Bavaria has a permanent seat, while the Emperor appoints the other three members from as many States: in the latter case, Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony, and Würtemberg only are represented. The Bundesrath takes action on the measures to be proposed to the Reichstag and the resolutions passed by that body; it also supervises the execution of laws, and may point out any defects in the laws or in their execution.

The members of the Reichstag, or Diet, are elected by universal (more properly *manhood*) suffrage and by direct secret ballot, in proportion to the population of the several States.[1] On the average, each of the 397 members represents rather more than one hundred thousand of the population. The proceedings of the Reichstag are public; it has the right (concurrently with those wielded by the Emperor and the Bundesrath) to propose laws for the Empire. It sits for three years, but may be dissolved by a resolution of the Bundesrath, with the consent of the Emperor. Deputies may not be bound by orders and instructions issued by their constituents. They are not paid.

As has been noted above, important matters such as railway management, so far as it relates to the harmonious and effective working of the existing systems, and the construction of new lines needful for the welfare and the defence of Germany, are under the control of the Empire—except in the case of Bavaria. The same holds good of

[1] Bismarck said in a speech to the Reichstag, on September 16, 1878: "I accepted universal suffrage, but with repugnance, as a Frankfurt tradition."

posts and telegraphs except in the Southern States. Railway companies are bound to convey troops and warlike stores at uniform reduced rates. In fact, the Imperial Government controls the fares of all lines subject to its supervision, and has ordered the reduction of freightage for coal, coke, minerals, wood, stone, manure, etc., for long distances, "as demanded by the interests of agriculture and industry." In case of dearth, the railway companies can be compelled to forward food supplies at specially low rates.

Further, with respect to military affairs, the central authority exercises a very large measure of control over the federated States. All German troops swear the oath of allegiance to the Emperor. He appoints all commanders of fortresses; the power of building fortresses within the Empire is also vested in him; he determines the strength of the contingents of the federated States, and in the last case may appoint their commanding officers; he may even proclaim martial law in any portion of the Empire, if public security demands it. The Prussian military code applies to all parts of the Empire (save to Bavaria, Würtemberg, and Saxony in time of peace); and the military organisation is everywhere of the same general description, especially as regards length of service, character of the drill, and organisation in corps and regiments. Every German, unless physically unfit, is subject to military duty and cannot shift the burden on a substitute. He must serve for seven years in the standing army: that is, three years in the field army and four in the reserve; thereafter he takes his place in the landwehr.[1]

[1] The three years are shortened to one year for those who have taken a high place in the Gymnasia (highest of the public schools);

The secondary States are protected in one important respect. The last proviso of the Imperial Constitution stipulates that any proposal to modify it shall fail if fourteen, or more, votes are cast against it in the Federal Council. This implies that Bavaria, Würtemberg, and Saxony, if they vote together, can prevent any change detrimental to their interests. On the whole, the new system is less centralised than that of the North German Confederation had been; and many of the Prussian Liberals, with whom the Crown Prince of Prussia very decidedly ranged himself on this question, complained that the Government was more federal than ever, and that far too much had been granted to the particularist prejudices of the Southern States.[1] To all these objections Bismarck could unanswerably reply that it was far better to gain this great end without bitterness, even if the resulting compact were in some respects faulty, than to force on the Southern States a more logically perfect system that would perpetuate the sore feeling of the past.

Such in its main outlines is the new Constitution of Germany. On the whole, it has worked well. That it has not fulfilled all the expectations aroused in that year of triumph and jubilation will surprise no one who knows that absolute and lasting success is attained only in Utopias, never in practical politics. In truth, the suddenness with which German unity was finally achieved was in itself a danger.

The English reader will perhaps find it hard to realise this until he remembers that the whole course of recorded

they feed and equip themselves and are termed "volunteers." Conscription is the rule on the coasts for service in the German navy. For the text of the Imperial Constitution, see Lowe, *Life of Bismarck*, ii., App. F.

[1] J. W. Headlam, *Bismarck*, p. 367.

history shows us the Germans politically disunited or for the most part engaged in fratricidal strifes. When they first came within the ken of the historians of ancient Rome, they were a set of warring tribes who banded together only under the pressure of overwhelming danger; and such was to be their fate for well-nigh two thousand years. Their union under the vigorous rule of the great Frankish chief whom the French call Charlemagne, was at best nominal and partial. The Holy Roman Empire, which he founded in the year 800 by a mystically vague compact with the Pope, was never a close bond of union, even in his stern and able hands. Under his weak successors that imposing league rarely promoted peace among its peoples, while the splendour of its chief elective dignity not seldom conduced to war. Next, feudalism came in as a strong political solvent, and thus for centuries Germany crumbled and mouldered away, until disunion seemed to be the fate of her richest lands, and particularism became a rooted instinct of her princes, burghers, and peasants. Then again, South was arrayed against North during and long after the time of the Reformation; when the strife of creeds was stayed, the rivalry of the Houses of Hapsburg and Hohenzollern added another cause of hatred.

As a matter of fact, it was reserved for the two Napoleons, uncle and nephew, to force those divided peoples to comradeship in arms. The close of the campaign of 1813 and that of 1814 saw North and South, Prussians and Austrians, for the first time fighting heartily shoulder to shoulder in a great war—for that of 1792–94 had only served to show their rooted suspicion and inner hostility. Owing to reasons that cannot be stated here, the peace of 1814–15 led up to no effective union: it even perpetuated

the old dualism of interests. But once more the hostility of France under a Napoleon strengthened the impulse to German consolidation and on this occasion there was at hand a man who had carefully prepared the way for an abiding form of political union; his diplomatic campaign of the last seven years had secured Russia's friendship and consequently Austria's reluctant neutrality; as for the dislike of the Southern States to unite with the North, that feeling waned for a few weeks amidst the enthusiasm caused by the German triumphs. The opportunity was unexampled: it had not occurred even in 1814; it might never occur again; and it was certain to pass away when the war fever passed by. How wise, then, to strike while the iron was hot! The smaller details of the welding process were infinitely less important than the welding itself.

One last consideration remains. If the opportunity was unexampled, so also were the statesmanlike qualities of the man who seized it. The more that we know concerning the narrowly Prussian feelings of King William, the centralising pedantry of the Crown Prince of Prussia, and the petty particularism of the Governments of Bavaria and Würtemberg, the more does the figure of Bismarck stand out as that of the one great statesman of his country and era. However censurable much of his conduct may be, his action in working up to and finally consummating German unity at the right psychological moment stands out as one of the greatest feats of statesmanship which history records.

But obviously a wedded life which had been preceded by no wooing, over whose nuptials Mars shed more influence than Venus, could not be expected to run a wholly smooth

course. In fact, this latest instance in ethnical lore of marriage by capture has on the whole led to a more harmonious result than was to be expected. Possibly, if we could lift the veil of secrecy which is wisely kept drawn over the weightiest proceedings of the Bundesrath and its committees, the scene would appear somewhat different. As it is, we can refer here only to some questions of outstanding importance the details of which are fairly well known.

The first of these which subjected the new Empire to any serious strain was a sharp religious struggle against the new claims of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Without detailing the many causes of friction that sprang up between the new Empire and the Roman Catholic Church, we may state that most of them had their roots in the activity shown by that Church among the Poles of Prussian Poland (Posen), and also in the dogma of papal infallibility. Decreed by the Œcumenical Council at Rome on the very eve of the outbreak of the Franco-German War, it seemed to be part and parcel of that forward Jesuit policy which was working for the overthrow of the chief Protestant States. Many persons—among them Bismarck [1]—claimed that the Empress Eugénie's hatred of Prussia and the warlike influence which she is said to have exerted on Napoleon III. on that critical day, July 14, 1870, were prompted by Jesuitical intrigues. However that may be (and it is a matter on which no fair-minded man will dogmatise until her confidential papers see the light), there is little doubt that the Pope at Rome and the Roman hierarchy among

[1] Busch, *Our Chancellor*, i., p. 139, where he quotes a conversation of Bismarck of November, 1883. On the Roman Catholic policy in Posen, see *ibid.*, pp. 143–145.

the Catholics of Central and Eastern Europe did their best to prevent German unity and to introduce elements of discord. The dogma of the infallibility of the Pope in matters of faith and doctrine was itself a cause of strife. Many of the more learned and moderate of the German Catholics had protested against the new dogma, and some of these "Old Catholics," as they were called, tried to avoid teaching it in the universities and schools. Their bishops, however, insisted that it should be taught, placed some recalcitrants under the lesser ban, and deprived them of their posts.

When these high-handed proceedings were extended even to the schools, the Prussian Government intervened, and early in 1872 passed a law ordaining that all school inspectors should be appointed by the King's Government at Berlin. This greatly irritated the Roman Catholic hierarchy and led to aggressive acts on both sides, the German Reichstag taking up the matter and decreeing the exclusion of the Jesuits from all priestly and scholastic duties of whatever kind within the Empire (July, 1872). The strife waxed ever fiercer. When the Roman Catholic bishops of Germany persisted in depriving "Old Catholics" of professorial and other charges, the central Government retorted by the famous "May Laws" of 1873. The first of these forbade the Roman Catholic Church to intervene in civil affairs in any way, or to coerce officials and citizens of the Empire. The second required of all ministers of religion that they should have passed the final examination at a high school and also should have studied theology for three years at a German university: it further subjected all seminaries to State inspection. The third accorded fuller legal protection to dissidents from the various creeds.

This anti-clerical policy is known as the "Kultur-Kampf," a term that denotes a struggle for civilisation against the forces of reaction. For some years the strife was of the sharpest kind. The Roman Catholic bishops continued to ban the "Old Catholics," while the State refused to recognise any act of marriage or christening performed by clerics who disobeyed the new laws. The logical sequel to this was obvious, namely, that the State should insist on the religious ceremony of marriage being supplemented by a civil contract.[1] Acts to render this compulsory were first passed by the Prussian Landtag late in 1873 and by the German Reichstag in 1875.

It would be alike needless and tedious to detail the further stages of this bitter controversy, especially as several of the later "May Laws" have been repealed. We may, however, note its significance in the development of parties. Many of the Prussian nobles and squires (Junkers the latter were called) joined issue with Bismarck on the Civil Marriage Act, and this schism weakened Bismarck's long alliance with the Conservative party. He enjoyed, however, the enthusiastic support of the powerful National Liberal party, as well as the Imperialist and Progressive groups. Differing on many points of detail, these parties aimed at strengthening the fabric of the central power, and it was with their aid in the Reichstag that the new institutions of Germany were planted and took root. The general election of 1874 sent up as many as 155 National Liberals, and they, with the other groups just named, gave the Government a force of 240 votes—a good working majority as long as Bismarck's aims were of a moderately Liberal character. This, however, was not always the

[1] Lowe, *Life of Bismarck*, ii., p. 336, note.

case even in 1874–79 when he needed their alliance. His demand for a permanently large military establishment alienated his allies in 1874, and they found it hard to satisfy the requirements of his exacting and rigorous nature.

The harshness of the "May Laws" also caused endless friction. Out of some 10,000 Roman Catholic priests in Prussia (to which kingdom alone the severest of these laws applied) only about thirty bowed the knee to the State. In 800 parishes the strife went so far that all religious services came to an end. In the year 1875, fines amounting to 28,000 marks (£1400) were imposed, and 103 clerics or their supporters were expelled from the Empire.[1] Clearly this state of things could not continue without grave danger to the Empire; for the Church held on her way with her usual doggedness, strengthened by the "protesting" deputies from the Reichsland on the south-west, from Hanover (where the Guelph feeling was still uppermost), as well as those from Polish Posen and Danish Schleswig. Bismarck and the anti-clerical majority of the Reichstag scorned any thoughts of surrender. Yet, slowly but surely, events at the Vatican and in Germany alike made for compromise. In February, 1878, Pope Pius IX. passed away. That unfortunate pontiff had never ceased to work against the interests of Prussia and Germany, while his encyclicals since 1873 mingled threats of defiance of the May Laws with insults against Prince

[1] Busch, *Our Chancellor*, i., p. 122, quotes speeches of his hero to prove that Bismarck himself disliked this Civil Marriage Law. "From the political point of view I have convinced myself that the State . . . is constrained by the dictates of self-defence to enact this law in order to avert from a portion of His Majesty's subjects the evils with which they are menaced by the Bishops' rebellion against the laws and the State" (speech of January 17, 1873). In 1849 he had opposed civil marriage.

Bismarck. His successor, Leo XIII. (1878–1903), showed rather more disposition to come to a compromise, and that, too, at a time when Bismarck's new commercial policy made the support of the Clerical Centre in the Reichstag peculiarly acceptable.

Bismarck's resolve to give up the system of Free Trade, or rather of light customs dues, adopted by Prussia and the German Zollverein in 1865, is so momentous a fact in the economic history of the modern world, that we must here give a few facts which will enable the reader to understand the conditions attending German commerce up to the years 1878–79, when the great change came. The old order of things in Prussia, as in all German States, was strongly protective—in fact, to such an extent as often to prevent the passing of the necessaries of life from one little State to its Lilliputian neighbours. The rise of the national idea in Germany during the wars against the great Napoleon led to a more enlightened system, especially for Prussia. The Prussian law of 1818 asserted the principle of imposing customs dues for revenue purposes, but taxed foreign products to a moderate extent. On this basis she induced neighbouring small German States to join her in a Customs Union (Zollverein), which gradually extended, until by 1836 it included all the States of the present Empire except the two Mecklenburgs, the Elbe Duchies, and the three Free Cities of Hamburg, Bremen, and Lübeck. That is to say, the attractive force of the highly developed Prussian State practically unified Germany for purposes of trade and commerce, and that, too, thirty-five years before political union was achieved.

This, be it observed, was on condition of internal Free

Trade but of moderate duties being levied on foreign products. Up to 1840 these import duties were on the whole reduced; after that date a protectionist reaction set in; it was checked, however, by the strong wave of Free-Trade feeling which swept over Europe after the victory of that principle in England in 1846–49. Of the new champions of Free Trade on the Continent, the foremost in point of time was Cavour, for that kingdom of Sardinia on which he built the foundations of a regenerated and united Italy. Far more important, however, was the victory which Cobden won in 1859–60 by inducing Napoleon III. to depart from the almost prohibitive system then in vogue in France. The Anglo-French Commercial Treaty of January, 1860, seemed to betoken the speedy conversion of the world to the enlightened policy of unfettered exchange of all its products. In 1862 and 1865 the German Zollverein followed suit, relaxing duties on imported articles and manufactured goods—a process continued in the commercial treaties and tariff changes of the years 1868 and 1869.

At this time Bismarck's opinions on fiscal matters were somewhat vague. He afterwards declared that he held Free Trade to be altogether false. But in this as in other matters he certainly let his convictions be shaped by expediency. Just before the conclusion of peace with France he so far approximated to Free Trade as to insist that the Franco-German Commercial Treaty of 1862,[1] which the war had of course abrogated—war puts an end to all treaties between the States directly engaged—should now

[1] For that treaty, and Austria's desire in 1862 to enter the German Zollverein, see *The Diplomatic Reminiscences of Lord A Lofthus*, ii., pp. 250–251.

be again regarded as in force and as holding good up to the year 1887. He even stated that he "would rather begin again the war of cannon-balls than expose himself to a war of tariffs." France and Germany, therefore, agreed to place one another permanently on "the most favoured nation" footing. Yet this same man, who so much desired to keep down the Franco-German tariff, was destined eight years later to initiate a protectionist policy which set back the cause of Free Trade for at least a generation.

What brought about this momentous change? To answer this fully would take up a long chapter. We can only glance at the chief forces then at work. Firstly, Germany, after the year 1873, passed through a severe and prolonged economic crisis. It was largely due to the fever of speculation induced by the incoming of the French milliards into a land where gold had been none too plentiful. Despite the efforts of the German Government to hold back a large part of the war indemnity for purposes of military defence and substantial enterprises, the people imagined themselves to be suddenly rich. Prices rapidly rose, extravagant habits spread in all directions, and in the years 1872–73 company-promoting attained to the rank of a fine art, with the result that sober, hard-working Germany seemed to be almost another England at the time of the South Sea Bubble. Alluding to this time, Busch said to Bismarck early in 1887: "In the long-run the [French] milliards were no blessing, at least not for our manufacturers, as they led to over-production. It was merely the bankers who benefited, and of these only the big ones."[1]

[1] *Bismarck: Some Secret Pages of his History*, by M. Busch, iii., p. 161 (Eng. edit.).

The result happened that always happens when a nation mistakes money, the means of commercial exchange, for the ultimate source of wealth. After a time of inflation came the inevitable collapse. The unsound companies went by the board; even sound ventures were in some cases overturned. How grievously public credit suffered, may be seen by the later official admission, that liquidation and bankruptcies of public companies in the following ten years inflicted on shareholders a total loss of more than 345,000,000 marks (£17,250,000).[1]

Now, it was in the years 1876–77, while the nation lay deep in the trough of economic depression, that the demand for "protection for home industries" grew loud and persistent. Whether it would not have been raised even if German finance and industry had held on its way in a straight course and on an even keel, cannot of course be determined, for the protectionist movement had been growing since the year 1872, owing to the propaganda of the "Verein für Sozialpolitik" (Union for Social Politics), founded in that year. But it is safe to say that the collapse of speculation due to the inflowing of the French milliards greatly strengthened the forces of economic reaction.

Bismarck himself put it in this way: that the introduction of Free Trade in 1865 soon produced a state of atrophy in Germany; this was checked for a time by the French war indemnity; but Germany needed a permanent cure, namely, Protection. It is true that his ideal of national life had always been strict and narrow—in fact, that of the average German official; but we may doubt whether he

[1] German State Paper of June 28, 1884, quoted by Dawson, *Bismarck and State Socialism*, App. B.

had in view solely the shelter of the presumedly tender flora of German industry from the supposed deadly blasts of British, Austrian, and Russian competition. He certainly hoped to strengthen the fabric of his Empire by extending the customs system and making its revenue depend more largely on that source and less on the contributions of the federated States. But there was probably a still wider consideration. He doubtless wished to bring prominently before the public gaze another great subject that would distract it from the religious feuds described above and bring about a rearrangement of political parties. The British people has good reason to know that the discussion of fiscal questions that vitally touch every trade and every consumer, does act like the turning of a kaleidoscope upon party groupings; and we may fairly well assume that so far-seeing a statesman as Bismarck must have forecast the course of events.

Reasons of statecraft also warned him to build up the Empire four-square while yet there was time. The rapid recovery of France, whose milliards had proved somewhat of a "Greek gift" to Germany, had led to threats on the part of the war party at Berlin, which brought from Queen Victoria, as also from the Czar Alexander, private but pressing intimations to Kaiser Wilhelm that no war of extermination must take place. This affair and its results in Germany's foreign policy will occupy us in Chapter XII. Here we may note that Bismarck saw in it a reason for suspecting Russia, hating England, and jealously watching every movement in France. Germany's future, it seemed, would have to be safeguarded by all the peaceable means available. How natural, then, to tone down her internal religious strifes by bringing forward

another topic of still more absorbing interest, and to aim at building up a self-contained commercial life in the midst of uncertain, or possibly hostile, neighbours. In truth, if we view the question in its broad issues in the life of nations, we must grant that Free Trade could scarcely be expected to thrive amidst the jealousies and fears entailed by the War of 1870. That principle presupposes trust and good-will between nations; whereas the wars of 1859, 1864, and 1870 left behind bitter memories and rankling ills. Viewed in this light, Germany's abandonment of Free Trade in 1879 was but the natural result of that forceful policy by which she had cut the Gordian knot of her national problem.

The economic change was decided on in the year 1879, when the federated States returned to "the time-honoured ways of 1823–65." Bismarck appealed to the Reichstag to preserve at least the German market to German industry. The chances of having a large export trade were on every ground precarious; but Germany could, at the worst, support herself. All interests were mollified by having moderate duties imposed to check imports. Small customs dues were placed on corn and other food supplies so as to please the agrarian party; imports of manufactured goods were taxed for the benefit of German industries, and even raw materials underwent small imposts. The Reichstag approved the change and on July 7th passed the Government's proposals by 217 to 117: the majority comprised the Conservatists, Clericals, the Alsace-Lorrainers, and a few National Liberals; while the bulk of the last-named, hitherto Bismarck's supporters on most topics, along with Radicals and Social Democrats, opposed it. The new tariff came into force on January 1, 1880.

On the whole, much may be said in favour of the immediate results of the new policy. By the year 1885 the number of men employed in iron and steel works had increased by 35 per cent. over the numbers of 1879; wages also had increased, and the returns of shipping and of the export trade showed a considerable rise. Of course, it is impossible to say whether this would not have happened in any case owing to the natural tendency to recover from the deep depression of the years 1875–79. The duties on corn did not raise its price, which appears strange until we know that the foreign imports of corn were less than 8 per cent. of the whole amount consumed. In 1885, therefore, Bismarck gave way to the demands of the agrarians that the corn duties should be raised still further, in order to make agriculture lucrative and to prevent the streaming of rural population to the towns. Again the docile Reichstag followed his lead. But two years later, it seemed that the new corn duties had failed to check the fall of prices and keep landlords and farmers from ruin; once more, then, the duties were raised, being even doubled on certain food products. This time they undoubtedly had one important result, that of making the urban population, especially that of the great industrial centres, more hostile to the agrarians and to the Government which seemed to be legislating in their interests. From this time forward the Social Democrats began to be a power in the land.

And yet, if we except the very important item of rent, which in Berlin presses with cruel weight on the labouring classes, the general trend of the prices of the necessaries of life in Germany has been downwards, in spite of all the protectionist duties. The evidence compiled in the British

official Blue-book on "British and Foreign Trade and Industry" (1903. Cd. 1761, p. 226) yields the following results. By comparing the necessary expenditure on food of a workman's family of the same size and living under the same conditions, it appears that if we take that expenditure for the period 1897–1901 to represent the number 100 we have these results:

Period.	Germany.	United Kingdom.
1877–1881	112	140
1882–1886	101	125
1887–1891	103	106
1892–1896	99	98
1897–1901	100	100

Thus the fall in the cost of living of a British working man's family has been 40 points, while that of the German working man shows a decline of only 12 points. It is, on the whole, surprising that there has not been more difference between the two countries.[1]

Before dealing with the new social problems that resulted, at least in part, from the new duties on food, we may point out that Bismarck and his successors at the German Chancery had used the new tariff as a means of extorting better terms from the surrounding countries.

[1] In a recent work, *England and the English* (London, 1904), Dr. Carl Peters says: "Considering that wages in England average 20 per cent. higher in England than in Germany, that the week has only 54 working hours, and that all articles of food are cheaper, the fundamental conditions of prosperous home-life are all round more favourable in England than in Germany. And yet he [the British working man] does not derive greater comfort from them, for the simple reason that a German labourer's wife is more economical and more industrious than the English wife." See, too, Professor Ashley's *Progress of the German Working Classes* (1904).

The Iron Chancellor has always acted on the diplomatic principle *do ut des*—"I give that you may give"—with its still more cynical corollary—"Those who have nothing to give will get nothing." The new German tariff on agricultural products was stiffly applied against Austria for many years, to compel her to grant more favourable terms to German manufactured goods. For eleven years Austria-Hungary maintained their protective barriers; but in 1891 German persistence was rewarded in the form of a treaty by which the Dual Monarchy let in German goods on easier terms provided that the corn duties of the northern Power were relaxed. The fiscal strife with Russia was keener and longer, but had the same result (1894). Of a friendlier kind were the negotiations with Italy, Belgium, and Switzerland, which led to treaties with those States in 1891. It is needless to say that in each of these cases the lowering of the corn duties was sharply resisted by the German agrarians. We may here add that the Anglo-German commercial treaty which expired in 1903 has been extended for two years; and that Germany's other commercial treaties were at the same time continued.

It is hazardous at present to venture on any definite judgment as to the measure of success attained by the German protectionist policy. Protectionists always point to the prosperity of Germany as the crowning proof of its efficacy. In one respect they are, perhaps, fully justified in so doing. The persistent pressure which Germany brought to bear on the even more protectionist systems of Russia and Austria undoubtedly induced those Powers to grant easier terms to German goods than they would have done had Germany lost her bargaining power by persisting in her former free trade tendency. Her success in this

matter is the best instance in recent economic history of the desirability of holding back something in reserve so as to be able to bargain effectively with a Power that keeps up hostile tariffs. In this jealously competitive age the State that has nothing more to offer is as badly off in economic negotiations as one that, in affairs of general policy, has no armaments wherewith to face a well-equipped foe. This consideration is of course scouted as heretical by orthodox economists; but it counts for much in the workaday world, where tariff wars and commercial treaty bargainings unfortunately still distract the energies of mankind.

On the other hand, it would be risky to point to the internal prosperity of Germany and the vast growth of her exports as proofs of the soundness of protectionist theories. The marvellous growth of that prosperity is very largely due to the natural richness of a great part of the country, to the intelligence, energy, and foresight of the people and their rulers, and to the comparatively backward state of German industry and commerce up to the year 1870. Far on into the nineteenth century, Germany was suffering from the havoc wrought by the Napoleonic wars and still earlier struggles. Even after the year 1850, the political uncertainties of the time prevented her enjoying the prosperity that then visited England and France. Therefore, only since 1870 (or rather since 1877–78, when the results of the mad speculation of 1873 began to wear away) has she entered on the normal development of a modern industrial State; and he would be an eager partisan who would put down her prosperity mainly to the credit of the protectionist *régime*. In truth, no one can correctly gauge the value of the complex causes—economic, political,

educational, scientific, and engineering—that make for the prosperity of a vast industrial community. So closely are they intertwined in the nature of things, that dogmatic arguments laying stress on one of them alone must speedily be seen to be the merest juggling with facts and figures.

As regards the wider influences exerted by Germany's new protective policy, we can here allude only to one; and that will be treated more fully in the chapter dealing with the partition of Africa. That policy gave a great stimulus to the colonial movement in Germany, and through her in all European States. As happened in the time of the old mercantile system, Powers which limited their trade with their neighbours felt an imperious need for absorbing new lands in the tropics to serve as close preserves for the mother-country. Other circumstances helped to impel Germany on the path of colonial expansion; but probably the most important, though the least obvious, was the recrudescence of that "mercantilism" which Adam Smith had exploded. Thus, the triumph of the national principle in and after 1870 was consolidated by means which tended to segregate the human race in masses, regarding each other more or less as enemies or rivals, alike in the spheres of politics, commerce, and colonial expansion.

We may conclude our brief survey of German constructive policy by glancing at the chief of the experiments which may be classed as akin to State Socialism.

In 1882 the German Government introduced the Sickness Insurance Bill and the Accident Insurance Bill, but they were not passed till 1884, and did not take effect till 1885. For the relief of sickness the Government relied on existing

institutions organised for that object. This was very wise, seeing that the great difficulty is how to find out whether a man really is ill or is merely shamming illness. Obviously a local club can find that out far better than a great imperial agency can. The local club has every reason for looking sharply after doubtful cases as a State Insurance Fund cannot do. As regards sickness, then, the Imperial Government merely compelled all the labouring classes, with few exceptions, to belong to some sick fund. They were obliged to pay in a sum of not less than about fourpence in the pound of their weekly wages; and this payment of the workman has to be supplemented by half as much paid by his employer—or rather, the employer pays the whole of the premium and deducts the share payable by the workman from his wages.

Closely linked with this is the Accident Insurance Law. Here the brunt of the payment falls wholly on the employer. He alone pays the premiums for all his work people; the amount varies according to (1) the man's wage, (2) the risk incidental to the employment. The latter is determined by the actuaries of the Government. If a man is injured (even if it be by his own carelessness) he receives payments during the first thirteen weeks from the ordinary Sick Fund. If his accident keeps him a prisoner any longer, he is paid from the Accident Fund of the employers of that particular trade, or from the Imperial Accident Fund. Here of course the chance of shamming increases, particularly if the man knows that he is being supported out of a general fund made up entirely by the employers' payments. The burden on the employers is certainly very heavy, seeing that for all kinds of accidents relief may be claimed; the only exception is

in cases where the injury can be shown to be wilfully committed.[1] A British Blue-book issued on March 31, 1905, shows that the enormous sum of £5,372,150 was paid in Germany in the year 1902 as compensation to workmen for injuries sustained while at work.

The burden of the employers does not end here. They have to bear their share of Old Age Insurance. This law was passed in 1889, at the close of the first year of the present Kaiser's reign. His father, the Emperor Frederick, during his brief reign had not favoured the principles of State Socialism; but the young Emperor William in November, 1888, announced that he would further the work begun by *his grandfather*, and though the difficulties of insurance for old age were very great, yet, with God's help, they would prove not to be insuperable.

Certainly the effort was by far the greatest that had yet been made by any State. The young Emperor and his Chancellor sought to build up a fund whereby 12,000,000 of work people might be guarded against the ills of a penniless old age. Their law provided for all workmen (even men in domestic service) whose yearly income did not exceed 2,000 marks (£100). Like the preceding laws, it was compulsory. Every youth who is physically and mentally sound, and who earns more than a minimum wage, must begin to put by a fixed proportion of that wage as soon as he completes his sixteenth year. His employer is also compelled to contribute the same amount for him. Mr. Dawson, in the work already referred to, gives some

[1] For the account given below, as also that of the Old Age Insurance Law, I am indebted to Mr. Dawson's excellent little work, *Bismarck and State Socialism* (Swan, Sonnenschein & Co., 1890). See also the Appendix to *The German Empire of To-Day*, by "Veritas" (1902).

figures showing what the joint payments of employer and employed amount to on this score. If the workman earns £15 a year (*i.e.*, about 6s. a week), the sum of 3s. 3½d. is put by for him yearly into the State Fund. If he earns £36 a year, the joint annual payment will be 5s. 7½d.; if he earns £78, it will be 7s. a year, and so on. These payments are reckoned up in various classes, according to the amounts; and according to the total amount is the final annuity payable to the worker in the evening of his days. That evening is very slow in coming for the German worker. For old age merely, he cannot begin to draw his full pension until he has attained the ripe age of seventy-one years. Then he will draw the full amount. He may anticipate that if he be incapacitated; but in that case the pension will be on a lower scale, proportioned to the amounts paid in and the length of time of the payments.

The details of the measure are so complex as to cause a good deal of friction and discontent. The calculation of the various payments alone employs an army of clerks; the need of safeguarding against personation and other kinds of fraud makes a great number of precautions necessary; and thus the whole system becomes tied up with red tape in a way that even the more patient workman of the Continent cannot endure.

In a large measure, then, the German Government has failed in its efforts to cure the industrial classes of their socialistic ideas. But its determination to attach them to the new German Empire, and to make that Empire the leading industrial State of the Continent, has had a complete triumph. So far as education, technical training, research, and enlightened laws can make a nation great,

Germany is surely on the high-road to national and industrial supremacy.

It is a strange contrast that meets our eyes if we look back to the years before the advent of King William and Bismarck to power. In the dark days of the previous reign Germany was weak, divided, and helpless. In regard to political life and industry she was still almost in swaddling-clothes; and her struggles to escape from the irksome restraints of the old Confederation seemed likely to be as futile as they had been since the year 1815. But the advent of the King and his sturdy helper to power speedily changed the situation. The political problems were grappled with one by one and were trenchantly solved. Union was won by Bismarck's diplomacy and Prussia's sword; and when the longed-for goal was reached in seven momentous years, the same qualities were brought to bear on the difficult task of consolidating that union. Those qualities were the courage and honesty of purpose that the House of Hohenzollern has always displayed since the days of the Great Elector; added to these were rarer gifts, namely, the width of view, the eagle foresight, the strength of will, the skill in the choice of means, that made up the imposing personality of Bismarck. It was with an eye to him, and to the astonishing triumphs wrought by his diplomacy over France, that a diplomatist thus summed up the results of the year 1870: "Europe has lost a mistress, but she has got a master."

After the lapse of a generation that has been weighted with the cuirass of militarism, we are able to appreciate the force of that remark. Equally true is it that the formation of the German Empire has not added to the culture and the inner happiness of the German people. The days of

quiet culture and happiness are gone; and in their place has come a straining after ambitious aims which is a heavy drag even on the vitality of the Teutonic race. Still, whether for good or for evil, the unification of Germany must stand out as the greatest event in the history of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER VII

THE EASTERN QUESTION

"Perhaps one fact which lies at the root of all the actions of the Turks, small and great, is that they are by nature nomads. . . . Hence it is that when the Turk retires from a country he leaves no more sign of himself than does a Tartar camp on the upland pastures where it has passed the summer."—*Turkey in Europe*, by "Odysseus."

THE remark was once made that the Eastern Question was destined to perplex mankind up to the Day of Judgment. Certainly that problem is extraordinarily complex in its details. For a century and a half it has distracted the statesmen and philanthropists of Europe; for it concerns not only the ownership of lands of great intrinsic and strategic importance, but also the welfare of many peoples. It is a question, therefore, which no intelligent man ought to overlook.

For the benefit of the tiresome person who insists on having a definition of every term, the Eastern Question may be briefly described as the problem of finding a *modus vivendi* between the Turks and their Christian subjects and the neighbouring States. This may serve as a general working statement. No one who is acquainted with the rules of logic will accept it as a definition. Definitions can properly apply only to terms and facts that have a clear outline; and they can therefore very rarely apply to the

facts of history, which are of necessity as many-sided as human life itself. The statement given above is incomplete, inasmuch as it neither hints at the great difficulty of reconciling the civic ideas of Christian and Turkish peoples, nor describes the political problems arising out of the decay of the Ottoman Power and the ambitions of its neighbours.

It will be well briefly to see what are the difficulties that arise out of the presence of Christians under the rule of a great Moslem State. They are chiefly these: First, the Koran, though far from enjoining persecution of Christians, yet distinctly asserts the superiority of the true believer and the inferiority of "the people of the book" (Christians). The latter therefore are excluded from participation in public affairs, and in practice are refused a hearing in the law courts. Consequently they tend to sink to the position of hewers of wood and drawers of water to the Moslems, these on their side inevitably developing the defects of an exclusive dominant caste. This is so especially with the Turks. They are one of the least gifted of the Mongolian family of nations; brave in war and patient under suffering and reverses, they nevertheless are hopelessly narrow-minded and bigoted; and the Christians in their midst have fared perhaps worse than anywhere else among the Mohammedan peoples.

M. de Laveleye, who studied the condition of things in Turkey not long after the war of 1877–78, thus summed up the causes of the social and political decline of the Turks:

"The true Mussulman loves neither progress, novelty, nor education; the Koran is enough for him. He is satisfied with his lot, therefore cares little for its improvement, somewhat like a Catholic monk; but at the

statement we must except the Montenegrins, who in their mountain fastnesses have ever defied the Turks. To the south of them is the large but little-known Province of Albania, inhabited by the descendants of the ancient Illyrians, with admixtures of Greeks in the south, Bulgarians in the east, and Servians in the north-east. Most of the Albanians forsook Christianity and are among the most fanatical and warlike upholders of Islam; but in their turbulent clan-life they often defy the authority of the Sultan, and uphold it only in order to keep their supremacy over the hated and despised Greeks and Bulgars on their outskirts. Last among the non-Turkish races of the Balkan Peninsula are a few Wallachs in Central Macedonia, and Greeks; these last inhabit Thessaly and the seaboard of Macedonia and of part of Roumelia. It is well said that Greek influence in the Balkans extends no further inland than that of the sea breezes.

Such is the medley of races that complicates the Eastern Question. It may be said that Turkish rule in Europe survives owing to the racial divisions and jealousies of the Christians. The Sultan puts in force the old Roman motto, *Divide et impera*, and has hitherto done so, in the main, with success. That is the reason why Islam dominates Christianity in the south-east of Europe.

This brief explanation will show what are the evils that affect Turkey as a whole and her Christian subjects in particular. They are due to the collision of two irreconcilable creeds and civilisations, the Christian and the Mohammedan. Both of them are gifted with vitality and propagandist power (witness the spread of the latter in Africa and Central Asia in our own day); and, while no comparison can be made between them on ideal grounds

and in their ethical and civic results, it still remains true that Islam inspires its votaries with fanatical bravery in war. There is the weakness of the Christians of south-eastern Europe. Superior in all that makes for home life, civilisation, and civic excellence, they have in time past generally failed as soldiers when pitted against an equal number of Moslems. But the latter show no constructive powers in time of peace, and have very rarely assimilated the conquered races. Putting the matter baldly, we may say that it is a question of the survival of the fittest between beavers and bears; and in the nineteenth century the advantage has been increasingly with the former.

These facts will appear if we take a brief glance at the salient features of the history of European Turkey. After capturing Constantinople, the capital of the old Eastern Empire, in the year 1453, the Turks for a time rapidly extended their power over the neighbouring Christian States, Bulgaria, Servia, and Hungary. In the year 1683 they laid siege to Vienna; but after being beaten back from that city by the valiant Sobieski, King of Poland, they gradually lost ground. Little by little Hungary, Transylvania, the Crimea, and parts of the Ukraine (South Russia) were wrenched from their grasp, and the close of the eighteenth century saw their frontiers limited to the River Dniester and the Carpathians.[1] Further losses were staved off only by the jealousies of the great Powers. Joseph II. of Austria came near to effecting further

[1] The story that Peter the Great of Russia left a clause in his will, bidding Russia to go on with her southern conquests until she gained Constantinople, is an impudent fiction of French publicists in the year 1812, when Napoleon wished to keep Russia and Turkey at war. Of course, Peter the Great gave a mighty impulse to Russian movements towards Constantinople.

conquests, but his schemes of partition fell through amidst the wholesale collapse of his too ambitious policy. Napoleon Bonaparte seized Egypt in 1798, but was forced by Great Britain to give it back to Turkey (1801–02). In 1807–12 Alexander I. of Russia resumed the conquering march of the Czars southward, captured Bessarabia, and forced the Sultan to grant certain privileges to the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. In 1806–15 the Servians revolted against Turkish rule: they had always remembered the days of their early fame, and in 1817 wrested from the Porte large rights of local self-government.

Ten years later the intervention of England and France in favour of the Greek patriots led to the battle of Navarino, which destroyed the Turko-Egyptian fleet and practically secured the independence of Greece. An even worse blow was dealt by the Czar Nicholas I. of Russia. In 1829, at the close of a war in which his troops drove the Turks over the Balkans and away from Adrianople, he compelled the Porte to sign a peace at that city, whereby they acknowledged the almost complete independence of Moldavia and Wallachia. These Danubian Principalities owned the suzerainty of the Sultan and paid him a yearly tribute, but in other respects were practically free from his control, while the Czar gained for the time the right of protecting the Christians of the Eastern, or Greek, Church in the Ottoman Empire. The Sultan also recognised the independence of Greece. Further troubles ensued which laid Turkey for a time at the feet of Russia. England and France, however, intervened to raise her up; and they also thwarted the efforts of Mehemet Ali, the rebellious Pasha of Egypt, to seize Syria from his nominal lord, the Sultan.

Even this bare summary will serve to illustrate three important facts: first, that Turkey never consolidated her triumph over the neighbouring Christians, simply because she could not assimilate them, alien as they were in race, creed, and civilisation; second, that the Christians gained more and more support from kindred peoples (especially the Russians) as these last developed their energies; third, that the liberating process was generally (though not in 1827) delayed by the action of the Western Powers (England and France), which, on grounds of policy, sought to stop the aggrandisement of Austria, or of Russia, by supporting the authority of the Sultan.

The policy of supporting the Sultan against the aggression of Russia reached its climax in the Crimean War (1854–55), which was due mainly to the efforts of the Czar Nicholas to extend his protection over the Greek Christians in Turkey. France, England, and later on the Kingdom of Sardinia made war on Russia—France, chiefly because her new ruler, Napoleon III., wished to play a great part in the world, and avenge the disasters of the Moscow campaign of 1812; England, because her Government and people resented the encroachments of Russia in the East, and sincerely believed that Turkey was about to become a civilised State; and Sardinia, because her statesman Cavour saw in this action a means of securing the alliance of the two Western States in his projected campaign against Austria. The war closed with the Treaty of Paris, of 1856, whereby the signatory Powers formally admitted Turkey "to participate in the advantages of the public law and system of Europe."

This, however, merely signified that the signatory Powers would resist encroachments on the territorial

integrity of Turkey. It did not limit the rights of the Powers, as specified in various "capitulations," to safeguard their own subjects residing in Turkey against Turkish misrule. The Sultan raised great hopes by issuing a firman granting religious liberty to his Christian subjects; this was inserted in the Treaty of Paris, and thereby became part of the public law of Europe. The Powers also became *collectively* the guarantors of the local privileges of the Danubian Principalities. Another article of the treaty provided for the exclusion of war-ships from the Black Sea. This of course applied specially to Russia and Turkey.[1]

The chief diplomatic result of the Crimean War, then, was to substitute a European recognition of religious toleration in Turkey for the control over her subjects of the Greek Church which Russia had claimed. The Sublime Porte was now placed in a stronger position than it had held since the year 1770; and the due performance of its promises would probably have led to the building up of a strong State. But the promises proved to be mere waste-paper. The Sultan, believing that England and France would always take his part, let matters go on in the old bad way. The natural results came to pass. The Christians became more and more restive under Turkish rule. In 1860 numbers of them were massacred in the Lebanon, and Napoleon III. occupied part of Syria with French troops. The vassal States in Europe also displayed increasing vitality, while that of Turkey waned. In 1861, largely owing to the diplomatic help of Napoleon III.,

[1] For the treaty and the firman of 1856, see *The European Concert in the Eastern Question*, by T. F. Holland; also Débidour, *Histoire diplomatique de l'Europe* (1814–1878), ii., pp. 150–152; *The Eastern Question*, by the late Duke of Argyll, i., chap. i.

Moldavia and Wallachia united and formed the Principality of Roumania. In 1862, after a short but terrible struggle, the Servians rid themselves of the Turkish garrisons and framed a constitution of the Western type. But the worst blow came in 1870. During the course of the Franco-German War the Czar's Government (with the good-will and perhaps the active connivance of the Court of Berlin) announced that it would no longer be bound by the article of the Treaty of Paris excluding Russian warships from the Black Sea. The Gladstone Ministry sent a protest against this act, but took no steps to enforce its protest. The young British diplomatist Sir Horace Rumbold, then at St. Petersburg, believed that she would have drawn back at a threat of war.[1] Finally, the Russian declaration was agreed to by the Powers in a treaty signed at London on March 31, 1871.

These warnings were all thrown away on the Porte. Its promises of toleration to Christians were ignored; the wheels of government clanked on in the traditional rusty way; governors of provinces and districts continued, as of yore, to pocket the grants that were made for local improvements; in defiance of the promises given in 1856, taxes continued to be "farmed" out to contractors; the evidence of Christians against Moslems was persistently refused a hearing in courts of justice[2]; and the collectors of taxes gave further turns of the financial screw in order to wring from the cultivators, especially from the Christians, the means of satisfying the needs of the State and the

[1] Sir Horace Rumbold, *Recollections of a Diplomatist* (First Series), ii., p. 295.

[2] As to this, see Reports: *Condition of Christians in Turkey* (1860). Presented to Parliament in 1861. Also Parliamentary Papers, Turkey, No. 16 (1877).

ever-increasing extravagance of the Sultan. Incidents which were observed in Bosnia by an Oxford scholar of high repute, in the summer of 1875, will be found quoted in an Appendix at the end of this volume.

Matters came to a climax in the autumn of that year in Herzegovina; the southern part of Bosnia. There after a bad harvest the farmers of taxes and the Mohammedan landlords insisted on having their full quota. For many years the peasants had suffered under agrarian wrongs, which cannot be described here; and now this long-suffering peasantry, mostly Christians, fled to the mountains, or into Montenegro, whose sturdy mountaineers had never bent beneath the Turkish yoke.[1] Thence they made forays against their oppressors until the whole of that part of the Balkans was aflame with the old religious and racial feuds. The Slavs of Servia, Bulgaria, and of Austrian Dalmatia also gave secret aid to their kith and kin in the struggle against their Moslem overlords. These peoples had been aroused by the sight of the triumph of the national cause in Italy, and felt that the time had come to strike for freedom in the Balkans. Turkey therefore failed to stamp out the revolt in Herzegovina, fed as it was by the neighbouring Slav peoples; and it was clear to all the politicians of Europe that the Eastern Question was entering once more on an acute phase.

These events aroused varied feelings in the European

[1] Efforts were made by the British Consul, Holmes, and other pro-Turks, to assign this revolt to Panslavonic intrigues. That there were some Slavonic emissaries at work is undeniable; but it is equally certain that their efforts would have had no result but for the existence of unbearable ills. It is time, surely, to give up the notion that peoples rise in revolt merely owing to outside agitators. To revolt against the warlike Turks has never been child's play.

States. The Russian people, being in the main of Slavonic descent, sympathised deeply with the struggles of their kith and kin, who were rendered doubly dear by their membership in the Greek Church. The Panslavonic Movement, for bringing the scattered branches of the Slav race into some form of political union, was already gaining ground in Russia; but it found little favour with the St. Petersburg Government owing to the revolutionary aims of its partisans. Sympathy with the revolt in the Balkans was therefore confined to nationalist enthusiasts in the towns of Russia. Austria was still more anxious to prevent the spread of the Balkan rising to the millions of her own Slavs. Accordingly, the Austrian Chancellor, Count Andrassy, in concert with Prince Bismarck and the Russian statesman Prince Gortchakoff, began to prepare a scheme of reforms which was to be pressed on the Sultan as a means of conciliating the insurgents of Herzegovina. They comprised (1) the improvement of the lot of the peasantry; (2) complete religious liberty; (3) the abolition of the farming of taxes; (4) the application of the local taxation to local needs; (5) the appointment of a commission, half of Moslems, half of Christians, to supervise the execution of these reforms and of others recently promised by the Porte.[1]

These proposals would probably have been sent to the Porte before the close of 1875 but for the diplomatic intervention of the British Cabinet. Affairs at London were then in the hands of that skilful and determined statesman, Disraeli, soon to become Lord Beaconsfield. It is impossible to discuss fully the causes of that bias in his

[1] For the full text, see Hertslet, *The Map of Europe by Treaty*, iv., pp. 2418–2429.

and our Foreign Minister, Lord Derby, gave a cold and guarded assent to the "Andrassy Note," though they were known to regard it as "inopportune." To the surprise of the world, the Porte accepted the note on February 11th, with one reservation.

This act of acceptance, however, failed to satisfy the insurgents. They decided to continue the struggle. Their irreconcilable attitude doubtless arose from their knowledge of the worthlessness of Turkish promises when not backed by pressure from the Powers; and it should be observed that the "note" gave no hint of any such pressure.[1] But it was also prompted by the hope that Servia and Montenegro would soon draw the sword on their behalf—as indeed happened later on. Those warlike peoples longed to join in the struggle against their ancestral foes; and their rulers were nothing loth to do so. Servia was then ruled by Prince Milan (1868–89) of that House of Obrenovitch which has been extinguished by the cowardly murders of June, 1903, at Belgrade. He had recently married Nathalie Kechko, a noble Russian lady, whose connexions strengthened the hopes that he naturally entertained of armed Muscovite help in case of a war with Turkey. Prince Nikita of Montenegro had married his second daughter to a Russian Grand Duke, cousin of the Czar Alexander II., and therefore cherished the same hopes. It was clear that unless energetic steps were taken by the Powers to stop the spread of the conflagration it would soon wrap the whole of the Balkan Peninsula in

[1] See Parliamentary Papers, Turkey, No. 5 (1877), for Consul Freeman's report of March 17, 1877, of the outrages by the Turks in Bosnia. The refugees declared they would "sooner drown themselves in the Unna than again subject themselves to Turkish oppression." The Porte denied all the outrages.

flames. An outbreak of Moslem fanaticism at Salonica (May 6th), which led to the murder of the French and German Consuls at that port, shed a lurid light on the whole situation and convinced the Continental Powers that sterner measures must be adopted towards the Porte.

Such was the position, and such the considerations, that led the three Empires to adopt more drastic proposals. Having found, meanwhile, by informal conferences with the Herzegovinian leaders, what were the essentials to a lasting settlement, they prepared to embody them in a second note, the Berlin Memorandum, issued on May 13th. It was drawn up by the three Imperial Chancellors at Berlin, but Andrassy is known to have given a somewhat doubtful consent. This "Berlin Memorandum" demanded the adoption of an armistice for two months; the repatriation of the Bosnian exiles and fugitives; the establishment of a mixed commission for that purpose; the removal of Turkish troops from the rural districts of Bosnia; the right of the Consuls of the European Powers to see to the carrying out of all the promised reforms. Lastly, the Memorandum stated that if within two months the three Imperial Courts did not attain the end they had in view (viz., the carrying out of the needed reforms), it would become necessary to take "efficacious measures" for that purpose.[1] Bismarck is known to have favoured the policy of Gortchakoff in this affair.

The proposals of the Memorandum were at once sent to the British, French, and Italian Governments for their assent. The two last immediately gave it. After a brief delay the Disraeli Ministry sent a decisive refusal and made no alternative proposal, though one of its members, Sir

[1] Hertslet, iv., pp. 2459–2463.

Stafford Northcote, is known to have formulated a scheme.[1] The Cabinet took a still more serious step: on May 24th, it ordered the British fleet in the Mediterranean to steam to Besika Bay, near the entrance to the Dardanelles—the very position it had taken before the Crimean War.[2] It is needless to say that this act not only broke up the "European Concert," but ended all hopes of compelling Turkey at once to grant the much-needed reforms. That compulsion would have been irresistible had the British fleet joined the Powers in preventing the landing of troops from Asia Minor in the Balkan Peninsula. As it was, the Turks could draw those reinforcements without hindrance.

The Berlin Memorandum was, of course, not presented to Turkey, partly owing to the rapid changes which then took place at Constantinople. To these we must now advert.

The Sultan, Abdul Aziz, during his fifteen years of rule had increasingly shown himself to be apathetic, wasteful, and indifferent to the claims of duty. In the month of April, when the State repudiated its debts, and officials and soldiers were left unpaid, his life of luxurious retirement went on unchanged. It has been reckoned that of the total Turkish debt of £T200,000,000, as much as £T53,000,000 was due to his private extravagance.[3] Discontent therefore became rife, especially among the fanatical

[1] *Sir Stafford Northcote, Earl of Iddesleigh*, by Andrew Lang, ii., p. 181.

[2] Our ambassador at Constantinople, Sir Henry Elliott, asked (May 9th) that a squadron should be sent there to reassure the British subjects in Turkey; but as the fleet was not ordered to proceed thither until after a long interval, and was kept there in great strength and for many months, it is fair to assume that the aim of our Government was to encourage Turkey.

[3] Gallenga, *The Eastern Question*, ii., p. 99.

bands of theological students at Constantinople. These Softas, as they are termed, numbering some 20,000 or more, determined to breathe new life into the Porte—an aim which the patriotic "Young Turkey" party already had in view. On May 11th large bands of Softas surrounded the buildings of the Grand Vizier and the Sheik-ul-Islam, and with wild cries compelled them to give up their powers in favour of more determined men. On the night of May 29th–30th they struck at the Sultan himself. The new Ministers were on their side: the Sheik-ul-Islam, the chief of the Ulemas, who interpret Mohammedan theology and law, now gave sentence that the Sultan might be dethroned for misgovernment; and this was done without the least show of resistance. His nephew, Murad Effendi, was at once proclaimed Sultan as Murad V.; a few days later the dethroned Sultan was secretly murdered, though possibly his death may have been due to suicide.[1]

We may add here that Murad soon showed himself to be a friend to reform; and this, rather than any incapacity for ruling, was probably the cause of the second palace revolution, which led to his deposition on August 31st. Thereupon his brother, the present ruler, Abdul Hamid, ascended the throne. His appearance was thus described by one who saw him at his first State progress through his capital: "A somewhat heavy and stern countenance . . . narrow at the temples, with a long gloomy cast of features, large ears, and dingy complexion. . . . It seemed to me the countenance of a ruler capable of good or evil, but knowing his own mind and determined to have his own

[1] For the aims of the Young Turkey party, see the *Life of Midhat Pasha*, by his son; also an article by Midhat in the *Nineteenth Century* for June, 1878.

way."[1] This forecast has been fulfilled in the most sinister manner.

If any persons believed in the official promise of June 1st, that there should be "liberty for all" in the Turkish dominions, they might have been undeceived by the events that had just transpired to the south of the Balkan Mountains. The outbreak of Moslem fanaticism, which at Constantinople led to the dethronement of two Sultans in order to place on the throne a stern devotee, had already deluged with blood the Bulgarian districts near Philippopolis. In the first days of May, the Christians of those parts, angered by the increase of misrule and fired with hope by the example of the Herzegovinians, had been guilty of acts of insubordination; and at Tatar Bazardjik a few Turkish officials were killed. The movement was of no importance, as the Christians were nearly all unarmed. Nevertheless, the authorities poured into the disaffected districts some 18,000 regulars, along with hordes of irregulars, or Bashi-Bazouks; and these, especially the last, proceeded to glut their hatred and lust in a wild orgy which desolated the whole region with a thoroughness that the Huns of Attila could scarcely have excelled (May 9th–16th.) In the upper valley of the Maritza, out of eighty villages all but fifteen were practically wiped out. Batak, a flourishing town of some 7000 inhabitants, underwent a systematic massacre, culminating in the butchery of all who had taken refuge in the largest church; of the whole population only 2000 managed to escape.[2]

[1] Gallenga, *The Eastern Question*, ii., p. 126. Murad died in the year 1904.

[2] Mr. Baring, a secretary of the British Legation at Constantinople, after a careful examination of the evidence, gave the number of Bulgarians slain as "not fewer than 12,000"; he opined that

It is painful to have to add that the British Government was indirectly responsible for these events. Not only had it let the Turks know that it deprecated the intervention of the European Powers in Turkey (which was equivalent to giving the Turks *carte blanche* in dealing with their Christian subjects), but on hearing of the Herzegovina revolt, it pressed on the Porte the need of taking speedy measures to suppress them. The despatches of Sir Henry Elliott, our ambassador at Constantinople, also show that he had favoured the use of active measures towards the disaffected districts north of Philippopolis.[1]

Of course, neither the British Government nor its ambassador foresaw the awful results of this advice; but their knowledge of Turkish methods should have warned them against giving it without adding the cautions so obviously needed. Sir Henry Elliott speedily protested against the measures adopted by the Turks, but then it was too late.[2] Furthermore, the contemptuous way in which Disraeli dismissed the first reports of the Bulgarian massacres as "coffee-house babble" revealed his whole attitude of mind on Turkish affairs; and the painful impression aroused by this utterance was increased by his declaration of July 30th that the British fleet then at

163 Mussulmans were perhaps killed early in May. He admitted the Batak horrors. Achmet Agha, their chief perpetrator, was at first condemned to death by a Turkish commission of inquiry, but he was finally pardoned. Shefket Pasha, whose punishment was also promised, was afterwards promoted to a high command. Parl. Papers, Turkey, No. 2 (1877), pp. 248–249; *ibid.*, No. 15 (1877), No. 77, p. 58. Mr. Layard, successor to Sir Henry Elliott at Constantinople, afterwards sought to reduce the numbers slain to 3500. Turkey, No. 26 (1877), p. 54.

[1] Parl. Papers, Turkey, No. 3 (1876), pp. 144, 173, 198–199.

[2] See, *inter alia*, his letter of May 26, 1876, quoted in *Life and Correspondence of William White* (1902), pp. 99–100.

Besika Bay was kept there solely in defence of British interests. He made a similar but more general statement in the House of Commons on August 11th. On the next morning the world heard that Queen Victoria had been pleased to confer on him the title of Earl of Beaconsfield. It is well known, on his own admission, that he could no longer endure the strain of the late sittings in the House of Commons and had besought Her Majesty for leave to retire. She, however, suggested the gracious alternative that he should continue in office with a seat in the House of Lords. None the less, the conferring of this honour was felt by very many to be singularly inopportune.

For at this time tidings of the massacres at Batak and elsewhere began to be fully known. Despite the efforts of Ministers to discredit them, they aroused growing excitement; and when the whole truth was known, a storm of indignation swept over the country as over the whole of Europe. Efforts were made by the Turcophil Press to represent the new trend of popular feeling as a mere party move and an insidious attempt of the Liberal Opposition to exploit humanitarian sentiment; but this charge will not bear examination. Mr. Gladstone had retired from the Liberal Leadership early in 1875 and was deeply occupied in literary work; and Lords Granville and Hartington, on whom devolved the duty of leading the Opposition, had been very sparing of criticisms on the foreign policy of the Cabinet. They, as well as Mr. Gladstone, had merely stated that the Government, on refusing to join in the Berlin Memorandum, ought to have formulated an alternative policy. We now know that Mr. Gladstone left his literary work doubtfully and reluctantly.[1]

[1] J. Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, ii., pp. 548–549.

Now, however, the events in Bulgaria shed a ghastly light on the whole situation, and showed the consequences of giving the "moral support" of Britain to the Turks. The whole question ceased to rest on the high and dry levels of diplomacy, and became one of life or death for many thousands of men and women. The conscience of the country was touched to the quick by the thought that the presence of the British Mediterranean fleet at Besika Bay was giving the same encouragement to the Turks as it had done before the Crimean War, and that, too, when they had belied the promises so solemnly given in 1856, and were now proved to be guilty of unspeakable barbarities. In such a case, the British nation would have been disgraced had it not demanded that no further alliance should be formed. It was equally the duty of the leaders of the Opposition to voice what was undoubtedly the national sentiment. To have kept silence would have been to stultify our Parliamentary institutions. The parrot cry that British interests were endangered by Russia's supposed designs on Turkey was met by the unanswerable reply that, if those designs existed, the best way to check them was to maintain the European concert and especially to keep in close touch with Austria, seeing that that Power had as much cause as England to dread any southward extension of the Czar's power. Russia might conceivably fight Turkey and Great Britain; but she would not wage war against Austria as well. Therefore, the dictates of humanity as well as those of common sense alike condemned the British policy, which from the outset had encouraged the Turks to resist European intervention, had made us in some measure responsible for the Bulgarian massacres, and, finally, had broken up the

concert of the Powers, from which alone a peaceful solution of the Eastern Question could be expected.

The union of the Powers having been dissolved by British action, it was but natural that Russia and Austria should come to a private understanding. This came about at Reichstadt in Bohemia on July 8th. No definitive treaty was signed, but the two Emperors and their Chancellors framed an agreement defining their spheres of influence in the Balkans in case war should break out between Russia and Turkey. Francis Joseph of Austria covenanted to observe a neutrality friendly to the Czar under certain conditions that will be noticed later on. Some of those conditions were distasteful to the Russian Government, which sounded Bismarck as to his attitude in case war broke out between the Czar and the Hapsburg ruler. Apparently the reply of the German Chancellor was unfavourable to Russia,[1] for it thereafter renewed the negotiations with the Court of Vienna. On the whole, the ensuing agreement was a great diplomatic triumph; for the Czar thereby secured the neutrality of Austria—a Power that might readily have remained in close touch with Great Britain had British diplomacy displayed more foresight.

The prospects of a great war, meanwhile, had increased, owing to the action of Servia and Montenegro. The rulers of those States, unable any longer to hold in their people, and hoping for support from their Muscovite kinsfolk, declared war on Turkey at the end of June. Russian volunteers thronged to the Servian forces by thousands; but, despite the leadership of the Russian General, Tchernayeff, they were soon overborne by the numbers and fanatical

[1] Bismarck, *Reflections and Reminiscences*, ii., chap. xxviii.

valour of the Turks. Early in September, Servia appealed to the Powers for their mediation; and, owing chiefly to the efforts of Great Britain, terms for an armistice were proposed by the new Sultan, Abdul Hamid, but of so hard a nature that the Servians rejected them.

On the fortune of war still inclining against the Slavonic cause, the Russian people became intensely excited; and it was clear that they would speedily join in the war unless the Turks moderated their claims. There is reason to believe that the Czar Alexander II. dreaded the outbreak of hostilities with Turkey in which he might become embroiled with Great Britain. The Panslavonic party in Russia was then permeated by revolutionary elements that might threaten the stability of the dynasty at the end of a long and exhausting struggle. But, feeling himself in honour bound to rescue Servia and Montenegro from the results of their ill-judged enterprise, he assembled large forces in South Russia and sent General Ignatieff to Constantinople with the demand, urged in the most imperious manner (October 30), that the Porte should immediately grant an armistice to those States. At once Abdul Hamid gave way.

Even so, Alexander II. showed every desire of averting the horrors of war. Speaking to the British ambassador at St. Petersburg on November 2d, he said that the present state of affairs in Turkey "was intolerable, and unless Europe was prepared to act with firmness and energy, he should be obliged to act alone." But he pledged his word that he desired no aggrandisement, and that "he had not the smallest wish or intention to be possessed of Constantinople." [1] At this time proposals for a conference of

[1] Hertslet, iv., p. 2508.

the Powers at Constantinople were being mooted: they had been put forth by the British Government on October 5th. There seemed, therefore, to be some hope of a compromise if the Powers reunited so as to bring pressure to bear on Turkey; for, a week later, the Sultan announced his intention of granting a constitution, with an elected Assembly to supervise the administration. But hopes of peace as well as of effective reform in Turkey were damped by the warlike speech of Lord Beaconsfield at the Lord Mayor's banquet on November 9th. He then used these words: "If Britain draws the sword in a righteous cause; if the contest is one which concerns her liberty, her independence, or her Empire, her resources, I feel, are inexhaustible. She is not a country that, when she enters into a campaign, has to ask herself whether she can support a second or a third campaign." On the next day the Czar replied in a speech at Moscow to the effect that if the forthcoming conference at Constantinople did not lead to practical results, Russia would be forced to take up arms; and he counted on the support of his people. A week later 160,000 Russian troops were mobilised.

The issue was thus clear as far as concerned Russia. It was not so clear for Great Britain. Even now, we are in ignorance as to the real intent of Lord Beaconsfield's speech at the Guildhall. It seems probable that, as there were divisions in his Cabinet, he may have wished to bring about such a demonstration of public feeling as would strengthen his hands in proposing naval and military preparations. The duties of a Prime Minister are so complex that his words may be viewed either in an international sense, or as prompted by administrative needs, or by his relations to his colleagues, or, again, they may be due

merely to electioneering considerations. Whatever their real intent on this occasion, they were interpreted by Russia as a defiance and by Turkey as a promise of armed help.

On the other hand, if Lord Beaconsfield hoped to strengthen the pro-Turkish feeling in the Cabinet and the country, he failed. The resentment aroused by Turkish methods of rule and repression was too deep to be eradicated even by his skilful appeals to imperialist sentiment.

The Bulgarian atrocities had at least brought this much of good: they rendered a Turco-British alliance absolutely impossible.

Lord Derby had written to this effect on August 29th to Sir Henry Elliott: "The impression produced here by events in Bulgaria has completely destroyed sympathy with Turkey. The feeling is universal and so strong that even if Russia were to declare war against the Porte, Her Majesty's Government would find it practically impossible to interfere." [1]

The assembly of a conference of the envoys of the Powers at Constantinople was claimed to be a decisive triumph for British diplomacy. There were indeed some grounds for hoping that Turkey would give way before a reunited Europe. The pressure brought to bear on the British Cabinet by public opinion resulted in instructions being given to Lord Salisbury (our representative, along with Sir H. Elliott, at the Conference) which did not differ much from the avowed aims of Russia and of the other Powers. Those instructions stated that the Powers could not accept mere promises of reform, for "the whole history of the Ottoman Empire, since it was admitted into the

[1] Parl. Papers, Turkey, No. 6 (1877).

European Concert under the engagements of the Treaty of Paris [1856], has proved that the Porte is unable to guarantee the execution of reforms in the provinces by Turkish officials, who accept them with reluctance and neglect them with impunity." The Cabinet, therefore, insisted that there must be "external guarantees," but stipulated that no foreign armies must be introduced into Turkey.[1] Here alone British ministers were at variance with the other Powers; and when, in the preliminary meetings of the Conference, a proposal was made to bring Belgian troops in order to guarantee the thorough execution of the proposed reforms, Lord Salisbury did not oppose it. In pursuance of instructions from London, he even warned the Porte that Britain would not give any help in case war resulted from its refusal of the European proposals.

It is well known that Lord Salisbury was far less pro-Turkish than the Prime Minister or the members of the British embassy at Constantinople. During a diplomatic tour that he had made to the chief capitals he convinced himself "that no Power was disposed to shield Turkey—not even Austria—if blood had to be shed for the *status quo*." (The words are those used by his assistant, Mr., afterwards Sir, William White.) He had had little or no difficulty in coming to an understanding with the Russian plenipotentiary, General Ignatieff, despite the intrigues of Sir Henry Elliott and his staff to hinder it.[2] Indeed, the situation shows what might have been effected in May, 1876, had not the Turks then received the support of the British Government.

[1] Parl. Papers, Turkey, No. 2 (1877), No. 1; also, in part, in Hertslet, iv., p. 2517.

[2] *Sir William White: Life and Correspondence*, p. 117.

Now, however, there were signs that the Turks declined to take the good advice of the Powers seriously; and on December 23rd, when the "full" meetings of the Conference began, the Sultan and his ministers treated the plenipotentiaries to a display of injured virtue and reforming zeal that raised the situation to the level of the choicest comedy. In the midst of the proceedings, after the Turkish Foreign Minister, Safvet Pacha, had explained away the Bulgarian massacres as a myth woven by the Western imagination, salvoes of cannon were heard, that proclaimed the birth of a new and most democratic constitution for the whole of the Turkish Empire. Safvet did justice to the solemnity of the occasion; the envoys of the Powers suppressed their laughter; and before long, Lord Salisbury showed his resentment at this display of Oriental irony and stubbornness by ordering the British fleet to withdraw from Besika Bay.[1]

But deeds and words were alike wasted on the Sultan and his ministers. To all the proposals and warnings of the Powers they replied by pointing to the superior benefits about to be conferred by the new constitution. The Conference therefore speedily came to an end (January 20th). It had served its purpose. It had fooled Europe.[2]

The responsibility for this act of cynical defiance must be assigned to one man. The Sultan had never before manifested a desire for any reform whatsoever; and it was not

[1] See Gallenga (*The Eastern Question*, ii., pp. 255–258) as to the scepticism regarding the new constitution, felt alike by foreigners and natives at Constantinople.

[2] See Parl. Papers, Turkey, No. 2 (1878), p. 114, for the constitution; and p. 302 for Lord Salisbury's criticisms on it; also *ibid.*, pp. 344–345, for Turkey's final rejection of the proposals of the Powers.

until December 19, 1876, that he named as Grand Vizier Midhat Pasha, who was known to have long been weaving constitutional schemes. This Turkish Siéyès was thrust to the front in time to promulgate that fundamental reform. His tenure of power, like that of the French constitution-monger in 1799, ended when the scheme had served the purpose of the real controller of events. Midhat obviously did not see whither things were tending. On January 24, 1877, he wrote to Saïd Pasha, stating that, according to the Turkish Ambassador at London (Musurus Pasha), Lord Derby congratulated the Sublime Porte on the dissolution of the Conference, "which he considers a success for Turkey." [1]

It therefore only remained to set the constitution in motion. After six days, when no sign of action was forthcoming, Midhat wrote to the Sultan in urgent terms reminding him that their object in promulgating the constitution "was certainly not merely to find a solution of the so-called Eastern Question, nor to seek thereby to make a demonstration that should conciliate the sympathies of Europe, which had been estranged from us." This note seems to have irritated the Sultan. Abdul Hamid, with his small, nervous, exacting nature, has always valued ministers in proportion to their obedience, not to their power of giving timely advice. In every independent suggestion he sees the germ of opposition, and perhaps of a palace plot. He did so now. By way of reply, he bade Midhat come to the palace. Midhat, fearing a trap, deferred his visit, until he received the assurance that the order for the reforms had been issued. Then he obeyed

[1] *Life of Midhat Pasha*, by Midhat Ali (1903), p. 142. Musurus must have deliberately misrepresented Lord Derby.

the summons; at once he was apprehended, and was hurried to the Sultan's yacht, which forthwith steamed away for the Ægean (February 5th). The fact that he remained above its waters, and was allowed to proceed to Italy, may be taken as proof that his zeal for reform had been not without its uses in the game which the Sultan had played against the Powers. The Turkish Parliament, which assembled on March 1st, acted with the subservience that might have been expected after this lesson. The Sultan dissolved it on the outbreak of war, and thereafter gave up all pretence of constitutional forms. As for Midhat, he was finally lured back to Turkey and done to death. Such was the end of the Turkish constitution, of the Turkish Parliament, and of their contriver.[1]

Even the dissolution of the Conference of the Powers did not bring about war at once. It seems probable that the Czar hoped much from the statesmanlike conduct of Lord Salisbury at Constantinople, or perhaps he expected to secure the carrying out of the needed reforms by means of pressure from the Three Emperors' League (see Chapter XII.). But, unless the Russians gave up all interest in the fate of their kinsmen and co-religionists in Turkey, war was now the more probable outcome of events. Alexander had already applied to Germany for help, either diplomatic or military; but these overtures, of whatever kind, were declined by Bismarck—so he declared in his great speech of February 6, 1888. Accordingly, the Czar drew closer to Austria, with the result that the Reichstadt agreement

[1] *Life of Midhat Pasha*, chaps. v.–vii. For the Sultan's character and habits, see an article in the *Contemporary Review* for December, 1896, by D. Kelekian.

of July 8, 1876, now assumed the form of a definitive treaty signed at Vienna between the two Powers on January 15, 1877.

The full truth on this subject is not known. M. Élie de Cyon, who claims to have seen the document, states that Austria undertook to remain neutral during the Russo-Turkish War, that she stipulated for a large addition of territory if the Turks were forced to quit Europe; also that a great Bulgaria should be formed, and that Servia and Montenegro should be extended so as to become conterminous. To the present writer this account appears suspect. It is inconceivable that Austria should have assented to an expansion of these Principalities which would bar her road southward to Salonica.[1]

Another and more probable version was given by the Hungarian Minister, M. Tisza, during the course of debates in the Hungarian Delegations in the spring of 1887, to this effect:—(1) No Power should claim an exclusive right of protecting the Christians of Turkey, and the Great Powers should pronouce on the results of the war; (2) Russia would annex no land on the right (south) bank of the Danube, would respect the integrity of Roumania, and refrain from touching Constantinople; (3) if Russia formed a new Slavonic State in the Balkans, it should not be at the expense of non-Slavonic peoples; and she would not claim special rights over Bulgaria, which was to be governed by a prince who was neither Russian nor Austrian; (4) Russia would not extend her military operations to the districts west of Bulgaria. These were the terms on which Austria

[1] Élie de Cyon, *Histoire de l'Entente franco-russe*, chap. i.; and in *Nouvelle Revue* for June 1, 1887. His account bears obvious signs of malice against Germany and Austria.

agreed to remain neutral; and in certain cases she claimed to occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina.[1]

Doubtless these, or indeed any, concessions to Austria were repugnant to Alexander II. and Prince Gortchakoff; but her neutrality was essential to Russia's success in case war broke out; and the Czar's Government certainly acted with much skill in securing the friendly neutrality of the Power which in 1854 had exerted so paralysing a pressure on the Russian operations on the Lower Danube.

Nevertheless, Alexander II. still sought to maintain the European Concert with a view to the exerting of pacific pressure upon Turkey. Early in March he despatched General Ignatieff on a mission to the capitals of the Great Powers; except at Westminster, that envoy found opinion favourable to the adoption of some form of coercion against Turkey, in case the Sultan still hardened his heart against good advice. Even the Beaconsfield Ministry finally agreed to sign a protocol, that of March 31, 1877, which recounted the efforts of the six Great Powers for the improvement of the lot of the Christians in Turkey, and expressed their approval of the promises of reform made by that State on February 13, 1876. Passing over without notice the new Turkish constitution, the Powers declared that they would carefully watch the carrying out of the promised reforms, and that, if no improvement in the lot of the Christians should take place, "they [the Powers] reserve to themselves to consider in common as to the means which they may deem best fitted to secure the well-being of the Christian populations, and the interests of the general peace."[2] This final clause contained a suggestion

[1] Débidour, *Hist. diplomatique de l'Europe* (1814–1878), ii., p. 502.
[2] Parl. Papers, Turkey, No. 9 (1877), p. 2.

scarcely less threatening than that with which the Berlin Memorandum had closed; and it is difficult to see why the British Cabinet, which now signed the London Protocol, should have wrecked that earlier effort of the Powers. In this as in other matters it is clear that the Cabinet was swayed by a "dual control."

But now it was all one whether the British Government signed the Protocol or not. Turkey would have none of it. Despite Lord Derby's warning that "the Sultan would be very unwise if he would not endeavour to avail himself of the opportunity afforded him to arrange a mutual disarmament," that potentate refused to move a hair's breadth from his former position. On the 12th of April the Turkish Ambassador announced to Lord Derby the final decision of his Government: "Turkey, as an independent State, cannot submit to be placed under any surveillance, whether collective or not. . . . No consideration can arrest the Imperial Government in their determination to protest against the Protocol of the 31st March, and to consider it, as regards Turkey, as devoid of all equity, and consequently of all binding character." Lord Derby thereupon expressed his deep regret at this decision, and declared that he "did not see what further steps Her Majesty's Government could take to avert a war which appeared to have become inevitable." [1]

The Russian Government took the same view of the case, and on April 7/19, 1877, stated in a despatch that, as a pacific solution of the Eastern Question was now impossible, the Czar had ordered his armies to cross the frontiers of Turkey. The official declaration of war followed on April 12/24. From the point of view of Lord

[1] Parl. Papers, Turkey, No. 15 (1877), pp. 354–355.

Derby this seemed "inevitable." Nevertheless, on May 1st he put his name to an official document which reveals the curious dualism which then prevailed in the Beaconsfield Cabinet. This reply to the Russian despatch contained the assertion that the last answer of the Porte did not remove all hope of deference on its part to the wishes and advice of Europe, and "that the decision of the Russian Government is not one which can have their concurrence or approval." We shall not be far wrong in assuming that, while the hand that signed this document was the hand of Derby, the spirit behind it was that of Beaconsfield.

In many quarters the action of Russia was stigmatised as the outcome of ambition and greed, rendered all the more odious by the cloak of philanthropy which she had hitherto worn. The time has not come when an exhaustive and decisive verdict can be given on this charge. Few movements have been free from all taint of meanness; but it is clearly unjust to rail against a great Power because, at the end of a war which entailed frightful losses and a serious though temporary loss of prestige, it determined to exact from the enemy the only form of indemnity which was forthcoming, namely, a territorial indemnity. Russia's final claims, as will be seen, were open to criticism at several points; but the censure just referred to is puerile. It accords, however, with most of the criticisms passed in London "club-land," which were remarkable for their purblind cynicism.

No one who has studied the mass of correspondence contained in the Blue-books relating to Turkey in 1875–77 can doubt that the Emperor Alexander II. displayed marvellous patience in face of a series of brutal provocations by Moslem

fanatics and the clamour of his own people for a liberating crusade. Bismarck, who did not like the Czar, stated that he did not want war, but waged it "under stress of Panslavist influence."[1] That some of his ministers and generals had less lofty aims is doubtless true; but practically all authorities are now agreed that the maintenance of the European Concert would have been the best means of curbing those aims. Yet, despite the irritating conduct of the Beaconsfield Cabinet, the Emperor Alexander sought to reunite Europe with a view to the execution of the needed reforms in Turkey. Even after the successive rebuffs of the rejection of the Berlin Memorandum by Great Britain and of the suggestions of the Powers at Constantinople by Turkey, he succeeded in restoring the semblance of accord between the Powers, and in leaving to Turkey the responsibility of finally and insolently defying their recommendations. A more complete diplomatic triumph has rarely been won. It was the reward of consistency and patience, qualities in which the Beaconsfield Cabinet was signally lacking.

We may notice one other criticism: that Russia's agreement with Austria implied the pre-existence of aggressive designs. This is by no means conclusive. That the Czar should have taken the precaution of coming to the arrangement of January, 1877, with Austria does not prove that he was desirous of war. The attitude of Turkey during the Conference at Constantinople left but the slightest hope of peace. To prepare for war in such a case is not a proof of a desire for war, but only of common prudence.

Certain writers in France and Germany have declared

[1] *Bismarck's Reflections and Reminiscences*, ii., p. 259 (Eng. ed.).

that Bismarck was the real author of the Russo-Turkish War. The dogmatism of their assertions is in signal contrast with the thinness of their evidence.[1] It rests mainly on the statement that the Three Emperors' League (see Chapter XII.) was still in force; that Bismarck had come to some arrangement for securing gains to Austria in the south-east as a set-off to her losses in 1859 and 1866; that Austrian agents in Dalmatia had stirred up the Herzegovina revolt of 1875; and that Bismarck and Andrassy did nothing to avert the war of 1877. Possibly he had a hand in these events—he had in most events of the time; and there is a suspicious passage in his Memoirs as to the overtures made to Berlin in the autumn of 1876. The Czar's ministers wished to know whether, in the event of a war with Austria, they would have the support of Germany. To this the Chancellor replied, that Germany could not allow the present equilibrium of the monarchical Powers to be disturbed: "The result . . . was that the Russian storm passed from Eastern Galicia to the Balkans."[2] Thereafter Russia came to terms with Austria as described above.

But the passage just cited only proves that Russia might have gone to war with Austria over the Eastern Question. In point of fact, she went to war with Turkey, after coming to a friendly arrangement with Austria. Bismarck therefore acted as "honest broker" between his two allies; and it has yet to be proved that Bismarck did not sincerely work with the other two Empires to make the coercion of Turkey by the civilised Powers irresistibly strong. In his speech of December 6, 1876, to the Reichstag, the

[1] Élie de Cyon, *op. cit.*, chap. i.; also in *Nouvelle Revue* for 1880.

[2] *Bismarck's Reflections and Reminiscences*, ii., p. 231 (Eng. ed.).

Chancellor made a plain and straightforward declaration of his policy, namely, that of neutrality, but inclining towards friendship with Austria. That, surely, did not drive Russia into war with Turkey, still less entice her into it. As for the statement that Austrian intrigues were the sole cause of the Bosnian revolt, it must appear childish to all who bear in mind the exceptional hardships and grievances of the peasants of that province. Finally, the assertion of a newspaper, the *Czas*, that Queen Victoria wrote to Bismarck in April, 1877, urging him to protest against an attack by Russia on Turkey, may be dismissed as an impudent fabrication.[1] It was altogether opposed to the habits of her late Majesty to write letters of that kind to the foreign ministers of other Powers.

Until documents of a contrary tenor come to light, we may say with some approach to certainty that the responsibility for the war of 1877–78 rests with the Sultan of Turkey and with those who indirectly encouraged him to set at naught the counsels of the Powers. Lord Derby and Lord Salisbury had of late plainly warned him of the consequences of his stubbornness; but the influence of the British embassy at Constantinople and of the Turkish Ambassador in London seems greatly to have weakened the force of those warnings.

It must always be remembered that the Turk will concede religious freedom and civic equality to the "Giaours" only under overwhelming pressure. In such a case he mutters *Kismet* ("It is fate"), and gives way; but the least sign of weakness or wavering on the part of the Powers awakens his fanatical scruples. Then his devotion to the Koran forbids any surrender. History has afforded

[1] Busch, *Our Chancellor*, ii., p. 126.

several proofs of this, from the time of the Battle of Navarino (1827) to that of the intervention of the Western Powers on behalf of the slaughtered and harried Christians of the Lebanon (1860). Unfortunately Abdul Hamid had now come to regard the concert of the Powers as a "loud-sounding nothing." With the usual bent of a mean and narrow nature he detected nothing but hypocrisy in its lofty professions, and self-seeking in its philanthropic aims, together with a treacherous desire among influential persons to make the whole scheme miscarry. Accordingly he fell back on the boundless fund of inertia with which a devout Moslem ruler blocks the way to Western reforms. A competent observer has finely remarked that the Turk never changes; his neighbours, his frontiers, his statute-books may change, but his ideas and his practice remain always the same. He will not be interfered with; he will not improve.[1] To this statement we must add that only under dire necessity will he allow his Christian subjects to improve. The history of the Eastern Question may be summed up in these assertions.

Abdul Hamid II. is the incarnation of the reactionary forces which have brought ruin to Turkey and misery to her Christian subjects. He owed his crown to a recrudescence of Moslem fanaticism; and his reign has illustrated the unsuspected strength and ferocity of his race and creed in face of the uncertain tones in which Christendom has spoken since the spring of the year 1876. The reasons which prompted his defiance a year later were revealed by his former Grand Vizier, Midhat Pasha, in an article in the *Nineteenth Century* for June, 1877. The following passage is especially illuminating:

[1] *Turkey in Europe*, by "Odysseus," p. 139.

"Turkey was not unaware of the attitude of the English Government towards her; the British Cabinet had declared in clear terms that it would not interfere in our dispute. This decision of the English Cabinet was perfectly well known to us, but we knew still better that the general interests of Europe and the particular interests of England were so bound up in our dispute with Russia that, in spite of all the declarations of the English Cabinet, it appeared to us to be absolutely impossible for her to avoid interfering sooner or later in this Eastern dispute. This profound belief added to the reasons we have mentioned was one of the principal factors of our contest with Russia."[1]

It appears, then, that the action of the British Government in the spring and summer of 1876, and the well-known desire of the Prime Minister to intervene in favour of Turkey, must have contributed to the Sultan's decision to court the risks of war rather than allow any intervention of the Powers on behalf of his Christian subjects.

The information that has come to light from various quarters serves to strengthen the case against Lord Beaconsfield's policy in the years 1875–77. The letter written by Mr. White to Sir Robert Morier on January 16, 1877, and referred to above, shows that his diplomatic experience had convinced him of the futility of supporting Turkey against the Powers. In that letter he made use of these significant words: "You know me well enough. I did not come here [Constantinople] to deceive Lord Salisbury or to defend an untenable Russophobe or pro-Turkish policy. There will probably be a difference of opinion in the

[1] See, too, the official report of our pro-Turkish Ambassador at Constantinople, Mr. Layard (May 30, 1877), as to the difficulty of our keeping out of the war in its final stages (Parl. Papers, Turkey, No. 26 (1877), p. 52).

Cabinet as to our future line of policy, and I shall not wonder if Lord Salisbury should upset Dizzy and take his place or leave the Government on this question. If he does the latter, the coach is indeed upset." Mr. White also referred to the *personnel* of the British Embassy at Constantinople in terms which show how mischievous must have been its influence on the counsels of the Porte.

A letter from Sir Robert Morier of about the same date proves that that experienced diplomatist also saw the evil results certain to accrue from the Beaconsfield policy: "I have not ceased to din that into the ears of the F. O. (Foreign Office), to make ourselves the *point d'appui* of the Christians in the Turkish Empire, and thus take all the wind out of the sails of Russia; and after the population had seen the difference between an English and a Russian occupation [of the disturbed parts of Turkey] it would jump to the eyes even of the blind, and we should *débuter* into a new policy at Constantinople with an immense advantage."[1] This advice was surely statesmanlike. To support the young and growing nationalities in Turkey would serve, not only to checkmate the supposed aggressive designs of Russia, but also to array on the side of Britain the progressive forces of the East. To rely on the Turk was to rely on a moribund creature. It was even worse. It implied an indirect encouragement to the "sick man" to enter on a strife for which he was manifestly unequal, and in which we did not mean to help him. But these considerations failed to move Lord Beaconsfield and the Foreign Office from the paths of tradition and routine.[2]

[1] *Sir William White: Life and Correspondence*, pp. 115–117.

[2] For the power of tradition in the Foreign Office, see *Sir William White: Life and Correspondence*, p. 119.

Finally, in looking at the events of 1875–76 in their broad outlines, we may note the verdict of a veteran diplomatist, whose conduct before the Crimean War proved him to be as friendly to the interests of Turkey as he was hostile to those of Russia, but who now saw that the situation differed utterly from that which was brought about by the aggressive action of Czar Nicholas I. in 1854. In a series of letters to the *Times* he pointed out the supreme need of joint action by all the Powers who signed the Treaty of Paris; that that treaty by no means prohibited their intervention in the affairs of Turkey; that wise and timely intervention would be to the advantage of that State; that the Turks had always yielded to coercion if it were of overwhelming strength, but only on those terms; and that therefore the severance of England from the European Concert was greatly to be deplored.[1] In private this former champion of Turkey went even farther, and declared on September 10, 1876, that the crisis in the East would not have become acute had Great Britain acted conjointly with the Powers.[2] There is every reason to believe that posterity will endorse this judgment of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

[1] Letters of December 31, 1875; May 16, 1876; and September 9, 1876, republished with others in *The Eastern Question*, by Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

[2] J. Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, ii., p. 555.

CHAPTER VIII

THE RUSSO-TURKISH WAR

"Knowledge of the great operations of war can be acquired only by experience and by the applied study of the campaigns of all the great captains. Gustavus, Turenne, and Frederick, as well as Alexander, Hannibal, and Cæsar, have all acted on the same principles. To keep one's forces together, to bear speedily on any point, to be nowhere vulnerable, such are the principles that assure victory."—NAPOLEON.

DESPITE the menace to Russia contained in the British Note of May 1, 1877, there was at present little risk of a collision between the two Powers for the causes already stated. The Government of the Czar showed that it desired to keep on friendly terms with the Cabinet of St. James, for, in reply to a statement of Lord Derby that the security of Constantinople, Egypt, and the Suez Canal was a matter of vital concern for Great Britain, the Russian Chancellor, Prince Gortchakoff, on May 30th sent the satisfactory assurance that the two latter would remain outside the sphere of military operations; that the acquisition of the Turkish capital was "excluded from the views of His Majesty the Emperor," and that its future was a question of common interest which could be settled only by a general understanding among the Powers.[1] So long as Russia adhered to these promises there could scarcely be any question of Great Britain's intervening on behalf of Turkey.

[1] Hertslet, iv., p. 2625.

Thus the general situation in the spring of 1877 scarcely seemed to warrant the hopes with which the Turks entered on the war. They stood alone confronting a Power which had vastly greater resources in men and treasure. Seeing that the Sultan had recently repudiated a large part of the State debt, and could borrow only at exorbitant rates of interest, it is even now mysterious how his Ministers managed to equip very considerable forces, and to arm them with quick-firing rifles and excellent cannon. The Turk is a born soldier, and will fight for nothing and live on next to nothing when his creed is in question; but that does not solve the problem of how the Porte could buy huge stores of arms and ammunition. It had procured 300,000 American rifles, and bought 200,000 more early in the war. On this topic we must take refuge in the domain of legend, and say that the life of Turkey is the life of a phœnix: it now and again rises up fresh and defiant among the flames.

As regards the Ottoman army, an English officer in its service, Lieutenant W. V. Herbert, states that the artillery was very good, despite the poor supply of horses; that the infantry was very good; the regular cavalry mediocre, the irregular cavalry useless. He estimates the total forces in Europe and Asia at 700,000; but, as he admits that the battalions of 800 men rarely averaged more than 600, that total is clearly fallacious. An American authority believed that Turkey had not more than 250,000 men ready in Europe, and that of these not more than 165,000 were north of the Balkans when the Russians advanced towards the Danube.[1] Von Lignitz credits the Turks with only 215,000 regular troops and 100,000 irregulars (Bashi

[1] *The Campaign in Bulgaria*, by F. V. Greene, pt. ii., ch. i.; W. V. Herbert, *The Defence of Plevna*, chaps. i.–ii.

Bazouks and Circassians) in the whole Empire; of these he assigns two-thirds to European Turkey.[1]

It seemed, then, that Russia had no very formidable task before her. Early in May seven army corps began to move towards that great river. They included 180 battalions of infantry, 200 squadrons of cavalry, and 800 guns—in all about 200,000 men. Their cannon were inferior to those of the Turks, but this appeared to be a small matter in view of the superior numbers which Russia seemed about to place in the field. The mobilisation of her huge army, however, went on slowly, and produced by no means the numbers that were officially reported. The British military attaché at the Russian headquarters, Colonel Wellesley, reported this fact to the British Government, and, on this being found out, incurred disagreeable slights from the Russian authorities.[2]

Meanwhile Russia had secured the co-operation of Roumania by a convention signed on April 16th, whereby the latter State granted a free passage through that Principality, and promised friendly treatment to the Muscovite troops. The Czar in return pledged himself to "maintain and defend the actual integrity of Roumania."[3] The sequel will show how this promise was fulfilled. For the present it seemed that the interests of the Principality were fully secured. Accordingly Prince Charles (elder brother of Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern, whose candidature for the Crown of Spain made so much stir in 1870) took the further step of abrogating the suzerainty of the Sultan over Roumania (June 3).

[1] *Aus drei Kreigen*, by General von Lignitz, p. 99.

[2] *With the Russians in War and Peace*, by Colonel F. A. Wellesley (1905), ch. xvii.

[3] Hertslet, iv., p. 2577.

Even before the declaration of independence Roumania had ventured on a few acts of war against Turkey; but the co-operation of her army, comprising 50,000 regulars and 70,000 National Guards, with that of Russia proved to be a knotty question. The Emperor Alexander II., on reaching the Russian headquarters at Plojeschti, to the north of Bukharest, expressed his wish to help the Roumanian army, but insisted that it must be placed under the commander-in-chief of the Russian forces, the Grand Duke Nicholas. To this Prince Charles demurred, and the Roumanian troops at first took no active part in the campaign. Undoubtedly their non-arrival served to mar the plans of the Russian staff.[1]

Delays multiplied from the outset. The Russians, not having naval superiority in the Black Sea, which helped to gain them their speedy triumph in the campaign of 1828, could only strike through Roumania and across the Danube and the difficult passes of the middle Balkans. Further, as the Roumanian railways had but single lines, the movement of men and stores to the Danube was very slow. Numbers of the troops, after camping on its marshy banks (for the river was then in flood), fell ill of malarial fever; above all, the carelessness of the Russian staff and the unblushing peculation of its subordinates and contractors clogged the wheels of the military machine. One result of it was seen in the bad bread supplied to the troops. A Roumanian officer, when dining with the Grand Duke Nicholas, ventured to compare the ration bread of the Russians with the far better bread supplied to his own men at cheaper rates. The Grand Duke looked at the two

[1] *Reminiscences of the King of Roumania*, edited by S. Whitman (1899), pp. 269, 274.

specimens and then—talked of something else.[1] Nothing could be done until the flood subsided and large bodies of troops were ready to threaten the Turkish line of defence at several points.[2]

The Ottoman position by no means lacked elements of strength. The first of these was the Danube itself. The task of crossing a great river in front of an active foe is one of the most dangerous of all military operations. Any serious miscalculation of the strength, the position, or the mobility of the enemy's forces may lead to an irreparable disaster; and until the bridges used for the crossing are defended by *têtes de pont* the position of the column that has passed over is precarious.

The Danube is especially hard to cross, because its northern bank is for the most part marshy, and is dominated by the southern bank. The German strategist von Moltke, who knew Turkey well, and had written the best history of the Russo-Turkish War of 1828, maintained that the passage of the Danube must cost the invaders upwards of 50,000 men. Thereafter, they would be threatened by the quadrilateral of fortresses—Rustchuk, Shumla, Varna, and Silistria. Three of these were connected by railway, which enabled the Turks to send troops quickly from the port of Varna to any position between the mountain stronghold of Shumla and the riverine fortress, Rustchuk.

Even the non-military reader will see by a glance at the map that this quadrilateral, if strongly held, practically

[1] Farcy, *La Guerre sur le Danube*, p. 73. For other malpractices see Col. F. A Wellesley's *With the Russians in Peace and War*, chaps. xi., xii.

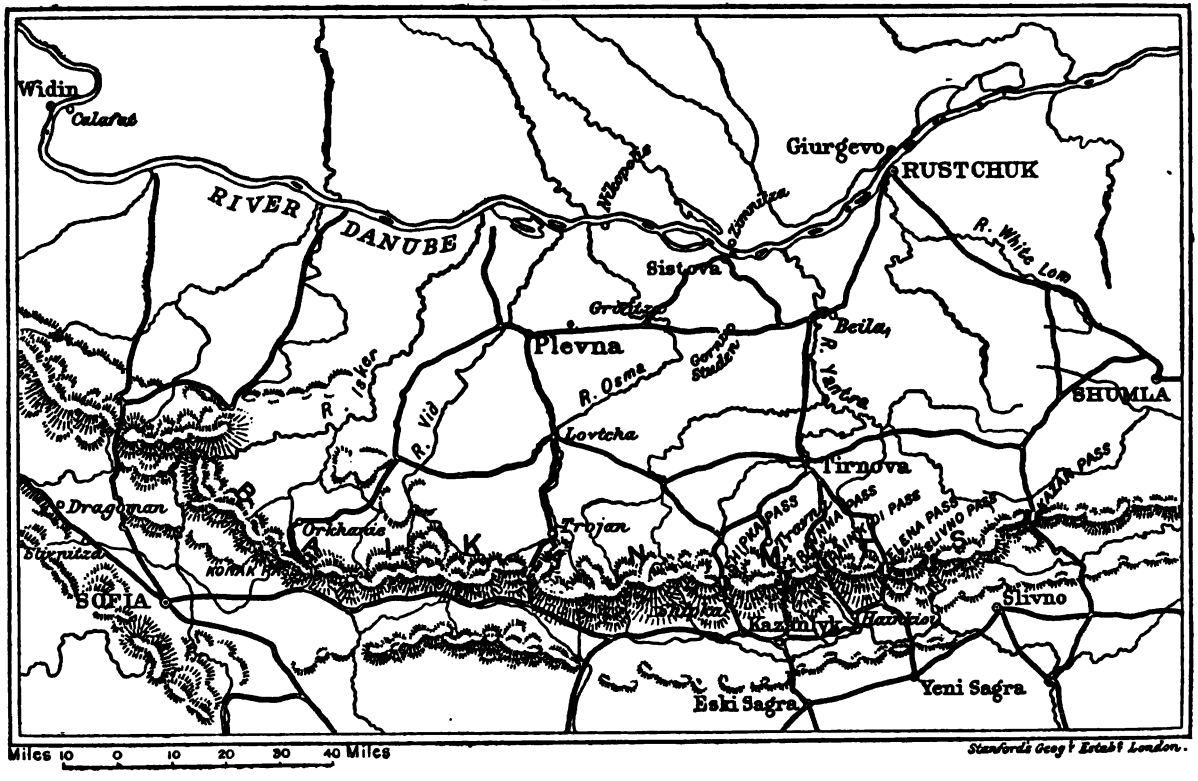
[2] *Punch* hit off the situation by thus parodying the well-known line of Horace: "Russicus expectat dum defluat amnis."

barred the roads leading to the Balkans on their eastern side. It also endangered the march of an invading army through the middle of Bulgaria to the central passes of that chain. Moreover, there are in that part only two or three passes that can be attempted by an army with artillery. The fortress of Widdin, where Osman Pasha was known to have an army of about 40,000 seasoned troops, dominated the west of Bulgaria and the roads leading to the easier passes of the Balkans near Sofia.

These being the difficulties that confronted the invaders in Europe, it is not surprising that the first important battles took place in Asia. On the Armenian frontier the Russians, under Loris Melikoff, soon gained decided advantages, driving back the Turks with considerable losses on Kars and Erzeroum. The tide of war soon turned in that quarter, but, for the present, the Muscovite triumphs sent a thrill of fear through Turkey, and probably strengthened the determination of Abdul-Kerim, the Turkish commander-in-chief in Europe, to maintain a cautious defensive.

Much could be said in favour of a "Fabian" policy of delay. Large Turkish forces were in the western provinces warring against Montenegro, or watching Austria, Servia, and Greece. It is even said that Abdul-Kerim had not at first more than about 120,000 men in the whole of Bulgaria, inclusive of the army at Widdin. But obviously, if the invaders so far counted on his weakness as to thrust their columns across the Danube in front of forces that could be secretly and swiftly strengthened by drafts from the South and West, they would expose themselves to the gravest risks. The apologists of Abdul-Kerim claim that such was his design, and that the signs of sluggishness which he at

BULGARIA


Widin
Calafat
RIVER DANUBE
Nikopoli
Zimnitza
Giurgevo
RUSTCHUK
R. White Lom
Sistova
Gricitza
Plevna
Beila
R. Yantra
R. Osma
Gorna Studen
R. Vid
R. Iaker
Lovtcha
SHUMLA
Tirnova
Dragoman
Orkhanie
Trojan
Slivnitza
SOFIA
Kazanlik
Slivno
Eski Sagra
Yeni Sagra
Miles 10 0 10 20 30 40 Miles
Stanford's Geog.l Estab.t London.

first displayed formed a necessary part of a deep-laid scheme for luring the Russians to their doom. Let the invaders enter Central Bulgaria in force, and expose their flanks to Abdul-Kerim in the Quadrilateral, and to Osman Pasha at Widdin; then the Turks, by well-concerted moves against those flanks, would drive the enemy back on the Danube, and perhaps compel a large part of his forces to lay down their arms. Such is their explanation of the conduct of Abdul-Kerim.

As the Turkish Government is wholly indifferent to the advance of historical knowledge, it is impossible even now to say whether this idea was definitely agreed on as the basis of the plan of campaign. There are signs that Abdul-Kerim and Osman Pasha adopted it, but whether it was ever approved by the War council at Constantinople is a different question. Such a plan obviously implied the possession of great powers of self-control by the Sultan and his advisers, in face of the initial success of the Russians; and unless that self-control was proof against panic, the design could not but break down at the crucial point. Signs are not wanting that in the suggestions here tentatively offered we find a key that unlocks the riddle of the Danubian campaign of 1877.

At first Abdul-Kerim in the Quadrilateral, and Osman at Widdin, maintained a strict defensive. The former posted small bodies of troops, probably not more than 20,000 in all, at Sistova, Nicopolis, and other neighbouring points. But, apart from a heavy bombardment of Russian and Roumanian posts on the northern bank, neither commander did much to mar the hostile preparations. This want of initiative, which contrasted with the enterprise displayed by the Turks in 1854, enabled

the invaders to mature their designs with little or no interruption.

The Russian plan of campaign was to destroy or cripple the four small Turkish ironclads that patrolled the lower reaches of the river, to make feints at several points, and to force a passage at two places—first near Ibrail into the Dobrudscha, and thereafter, under cover of that diversion, from Simnitza to Sistova. The latter place of crossing combined all possible advantages. It was far enough away from the Turkish Quadrilateral to afford the first essentials of safety; it was known to be but weakly held; its position on the shortest line of road between the Danube and a practicable pass of the Balkans—the Shipka Pass—formed a strong recommendation; while the presence of an island helped on the first preparations.

The flood of the Danube having at last subsided, all was ready by midsummer. Russian batteries and torpedo-boats had destroyed two Turkish gunboats in the lower reaches of the river, and on June 22nd a Russian force crossed in boats from a point near Galatz to Matchin, and made good their hold on the Dobrudscha.

Preparations were also ripe at Simnitza. In the narrow northern arm of the river the boats and pontoons collected by the Russians were launched with no difficulty, the island was occupied, and on the night of June 26–27, a Volhynian regiment, along with Cossacks, crossed in boats over the broad arm of the river, there some 1000 yards wide, and gained a foothold on the bank. Already their numbers were thinned by a dropping fire from a Turkish detachment; but the Turks made the mistake of trusting to the bullet instead of plying the bayonet. Before dawn broke, the first-comers had been able to ensconce them-

selves under a bank until other boats came up. Then with rousing cheers they charged the Turks and pressed them back.

This was the scene which greeted the eyes of General Dragomiroff as his boat drew near to the shore at 5 A.M. Half hidden by the morning mist, the issue seemed doubtful. But at his side stood a general, fresh from triumphs in Turkestan, who had begged to be allowed to come as volunteer or aide-de-camp. When Dragomiroff, in an agony of suspense, lowered his glass, the other continued to gaze, and at last exclaimed: "I congratulate you on your victory." "Where do you see that?" asked Dragomiroff. "Where? On the faces of the soldiers. Look at them. Watch them as they charge the enemy. It is a pleasure to see them." The verdict was true. It was the verdict of Skobeleff.[1]

Such was the first appearance in European warfare of the greatest leader of men that Russia has produced since the days of Suvoroff. The younger man resembled that sturdy veteran in his passion for war, his ambition, and that frank, bluff bearing which always wins the hearts of the soldiery. The grandson of a peasant, whose bravery had won him promotion in the great year, 1812; the son of a general whose prowess was renowned, Skobeleff was at once a commander and a soldier. "Ah! he knew the soul of a soldier as if he were himself a private." These were the words often uttered by the Russians about Skobeleff; similar things had been said of Suvoroff in his day. For champions such as these the emotional Slavs will al-

[1] Quoted from a report by an eye-witness, by "O. K." (Madame Novikoff), *Skobeleff and the Slavonic Cause*, p. 38. The crossing was planned by the Grand Duke Nicholas; see von Lignitz, *Aus drei Kriegen*, p. 149

ways pour out their blood like water. But, like the captor of Warsaw, Skobeleff knew when to put aside the bayonet and win the day by skill. Both were hard hitters, but they had a hold on the principles of the art of war. The combination of these qualities was formidable; and many Russians believe that, had the younger man, with his magnificent physique and magnetic personality, enjoyed the length of days vouchsafed to the diminutive Suvoroff, he would have changed the face of two continents.

The United States attaché to the Russian army in the Russo-Turkish War afterwards spoke of his military genius as "stupendous," and prophesied that, should he live twenty years longer, and lead the Russian armies in the next Turkish war, he would win a place side by side with "Napoleon, Wellington, Grant, and Moltke." To equate these four names is a mark of transatlantic enthusiasm rather than of balanced judgment; but the estimate, so far as it concerns Skobeleff, reflects the opinion of nearly all who knew him.[1]

Encouraged by the advent of Skobeleff and Dragomiroff, the Russians assumed the offensive with full effect, and by the afternoon of that eventful day had mastered the rising ground behind Sistova. Here again the Turkish defence was tame. The town was unfortified, but its outskirts presented facilities for defence. Nevertheless, under the pressure of the Russian attack and of artillery fire from the north bank, the small Turkish garrison gave up the town and retreated towards Rustchuk. At many points on that day the Russians treated their foes to a heavy bombardment or feints of crossing, especially at Nicopolis and Rustchuk; and this accounts for the failure of the

[1] F. V. Greene, *Sketches of Army Life in Russia*, p. 142.

defenders to help the weak garrison on which fell the brunt of the attack. All things considered, the crossing of the Danube must rank as a highly creditable achievement, skilfully planned and stoutly carried out; it cost the invaders scarcely 700 men.[1]

They now began to make a pontoon-bridge across the Danube between Simnitza and Sistova; and by July 2nd had 65,000 men and 244 cannon in and near the latter town. Meanwhile, their 14th corps held the central position of Babadagh in the Dobrudscha, thereby preventing any attack from the northeast side of the Quadrilateral against their communications with the south of Russia.

It may be questioned, however, whether the invaders did well to keep so large a force in the Dobrudscha, seeing that a smaller body of light troops patrolling the left bank of the lower Danube or at the *tête de pont* at Matchin would have answered the same purpose. The chief use of the crossing at Matchin was to distract the attention of the enemy, an advance through the unhealthy district of the Dobrudscha against the Turkish Quadrilateral being in every way risky; above all, the retention of a whole corps on that side weakened the main line of advance, that from Sistova; and here it was soon clear that the Russians had too few men for the enterprise in hand. The pontoon-bridge over the Danube was completed by July 2nd, a fact which enabled those troops which were in Roumania to be hurried forward to the front.

Obviously it was unsafe to march towards the Balkans until both flanks were secured against onsets from the

[1] Farcy, *La Guerre sur le Danube*, ch. viii.; *"Daily News" Correspondence of the War of 1877–78*, chap. viii.

Quadrilateral on the east, and from Nicopolis and Widdin on the west. At Nicopolis, twenty-five miles away, there were about 10,000 Turks; and around Widdin, about 100 miles farther up the stream, Osman mustered 40,000 more. To him Abdul-Kerim now sent an order to march against the flank of the invaders.

Nor were the Balkan passes open to the Russians; for, after the crossing of the Danube, Reuf Pasha had orders to collect all available troops for their defence, from the Shipka Pass to the Slievno Pass farther east; 7000 men now held the Shipka; about 10,000 acted as a general reserve at Slievno; 3000 were thrown forward to Tirnova, where the mountainous country begins, and detachments held the more difficult tracks over the mountains. An urgent message was also sent to Suleiman Pasha to disengage the largest possible force from the Montenegrin war; and, had he received this message in time, or had he acted with the needful speed and skill, events might have gone very differently.

For some time the Turks seemed to be paralysed at all points by the vigour of the Muscovite movements. Two corps, the 13th and 14th, marched south-east from Sistova to the torrent of the Jantra, or Yantra, and seized Beila, an important centre of roads in that district. This secured them against any immediate attack from the Quadrilateral. The Grand Duke Nicholas also ordered the 9th corps, under the command of General Krüdener, to advance from Sistova and attack the weakly fortified town of Nicopolis. Aided by the Roumanian guns on the north bank of the Danube, this corps succeeded in overpowering the defence and capturing the town, along with 7000 troops and 110 guns (July 16th).

Thus the invaders seemed to have gained a secure base on the Danube, from Sistova to Nicopolis, whence they could safely push forward their vanguard to the Balkans. In point of fact their light troops had already seized one of its more difficult passes—an exploit that will always recall the name of that dashing leader, General Gurko. The plan now to be described was his conception; it was approved by the Grand Duke Nicholas. Setting out from Sistova and drawing part of his column from the force at Beila, Gurko first occupied the important town of Tirnova, the small Turkish garrison making a very poor attempt to defend the old Bulgarian capital (July 7th). The liberators there received an overwhelming ovation, and gained many recruits for the "Bulgarian Legion." Pushing ahead, the Cossacks and Dragoons seized large supplies of provisions stored by the Turks, and gained valuable news respecting the defences of the passes.

The Shipka Pass, due south of Tirnova, was now strongly held, and Turkish troops were hurrying towards the two passes north of Slievno, some fifty miles farther east. Even so they had not enough men at hand to defend all the passes of the mountain chain that formed their chief line of defence. They left one of them practically undefended; this was the Hainkoi Pass, having an elevation of 3700 feet above the sea.

A Russian diplomatist, Prince Tserteleff, who was charged to collect information about the passes, found that the Hainkoi enjoyed an evil reputation. "Ill luck awaits him who crosses the Hainkoi Pass," so ran the local proverb. He therefore determined to try it; by dint of questioning the friendly Bulgarian peasantry he found one man who had been through it once, and that was two years

before, with an ox-cart. Where an ox-cart could go, a light mountain gun could go. Accordingly, the Prince and General Rauch went with 200 Cossacks to explore the pass, set the men to work at the worst places, and, thanks to the secrecy observed by the peasantry, soon made the pass to the summit practicable for cavalry and light guns. The Prince disguised himself as a Bulgarian shepherd to examine the southern outlet; and, on his bringing a favourable report, 11,000 men of Gurko's command began to thread the intricacies of the defile.

Thanks to good food, stout hearts, jokes, and songs, they managed to get the guns up the worst places. Then began the perils of the descent. But the Turks knew nothing of their effort, else it might have ended far otherwise. At the southern end 300 Turkish regulars were peacefully smoking their pipes and cooking their food when the Cossacks and Rifles in the vanguard burst upon them, drove them headlong, and seized the village of Hainkoi. A pass over the Balkans had been secured at the cost of two men killed and three wounded! Gurko was almost justified in sending to the Grand Duke Nicholas the proud vaunt that none but Russian soldiers could have brought field artillery over such a pass, and in the short space of three days (July 11–14).[1]

After bringing his column of 11,000 men through the pass, Gurko drove off four Turkish battalions sent against him from the Shipka Pass and Kazanlik. Next he sent out bands of Cossacks to spread terror southwards, and delude the Turks into the belief that he meant to strike at the important towns, Yeni Zagra and Eski Zagra, on the

[1] *General Gurko's Advance Guard in 1877*, by Colonel Epauchin, translated by H. Havelock (The Wolseley Series, 1900), chap. ii.; *The Daily News War Correspondence* (1877), pp. 263–270.

road to Adrianople. Having thus caused them to loosen their grip on Kazanlik and the Shipka, he wheeled his main force to the westward (leaving 3500 men to hold the exit of the Hainkoi), and drove the Turks successively from positions in front of the town, from the town itself, and then from the village of Shipka. Above that place towered the mighty wall of the Balkans, lessened somewhat at the pass itself, but presenting even there a seemingly impregnable position.

Gurko, however, relied on the discouragement of the Turkish garrison after the defeats of their comrades, and at seeing their positions turned on the south while they were also threatened on the north; for another Russian column had advanced from Tirnova up the more gradual northern slopes of the Balkans, and now began to hammer at the defences of the pass on that side. The garrison consisted of six and a half battalions under Khulussi Pasha, and the wreckage of five battalions already badly beaten by Gurko's column. These, with one battery of artillery, held the pass and the neighbouring peaks, which they had in part fortified.

In pursuance of a pre-arranged plan for a joint attack on July 17th of both Russian forces, the northern body advanced up the slopes; but, as Gurko's men were unable to make their diversion in time, the attack failed. An isolated attempt by Gurko's force on the next day also failed, the defenders disgracing themselves by tricking the Russians with the white flag and firing upon them. But the Turks were now in difficulties for want of food and water; or possibly they were seized with panic. At any rate, while amusing the Russians with proposals of surrender, they stole off in small bodies, early on July 19th.

The truth was, ere long, found out by outposts of the north Russian forces; Skobeleff and his men were soon at the summit, and there Gurko's vanguard speedily joined them with shouts of joy.

Thus, within twenty-three days from the crossing of the Danube Gurko seized two passes of the Balkans, besides capturing 800 prisoners and 13 guns. It is not surprising that a Turkish official despatch of July 21st to Suleiman summed up the position: "The existence of the Empire hangs on a hair." And when Gurko's light troops proceeded to raid the valley of the Maritsa, it seemed that the Turkish defence would collapse as helplessly as in the memorable campaign of 1828. We must add here that the Bulgarians now began to revenge themselves for the outrages of May, 1876; and the struggle was sullied by horrible acts on both sides.

The impression produced by these dramatic strokes was profound and widespread. The British fleet was sent to Besika Bay, a step preparatory, as it seemed, to steaming up the Dardanelles to the Sea of Marmora. At Adrianople crowds of Moslems fled away in wild confusion towards Constantinople. There the frequent meetings of ministers at the Sultan's palace testified to the extent of the alarm; and that nervous despot wavered between the design of transferring the seat of government to Brussa in Asia Minor, and that of unfurling the standard of the Prophet and summoning all the faithful to rally to its defence against the infidels. Finally he took courage from despair, and adopted the more manly course. But first he disgraced his ministers. The War Minister and Abdul-Kerim were summarily deposed, the latter being sent off as prisoner to the island of Lemnos.

All witnesses agree that the War Minister, Redif Pasha, was incapable and corrupt. The age and weakness of Abdul-Kerim might have excused his comparative inaction in the Quadrilateral in the first half of July. It is probable that his plan of campaign, described above, was sound; but he lacked the vigour, and the authorities at Constantinople lacked the courage, to carry it out thoroughly and consistently.

Mehemet Ali Pasha, a renegade German, who had been warring with some success in Montenegro, assumed the supreme command on July 22nd; and Suleiman Pasha, who, with most of his forces, had been brought by sea from Antivari to the mouth of the river Maritsa, now gathered together all the available troops for the defence of Roumelia.

The Czar, on his side, cherished hopes of ending the war while Fortune smiled on his standards. There are good grounds for thinking that he had entered on it with great reluctance. In its early stages he let the British Government know of his desire to come to terms with Turkey; and now his War Minister, General Milutin, hinted to Colonel F. A. Wellesley, British attaché at headquarters, that the mediation of Great Britain would be welcomed by Russia. That officer on July 30th had an interview with the Emperor, who set forth the conditions on which he would be prepared to accept peace with Turkey. They were: the recovery of the strip of Bessarabia lost in 1856, and the acquisition of Batoum in Asia Minor. Alexander II. also stated that he would not occupy Constantinople unless that step were necessitated by the course of events; that the Powers would be invited to a conference for the settlement of Turkish affairs; and that he had no wish to

interfere with the British spheres of interest already referred to.

Colonel Wellesley at once left headquarters for London, but on the following day the aspect of the campaign underwent a complete change, which, in the opinion of the British Government, rendered futile all hope of a settlement on the conditions laid down by the Czar.[1] For now, when the Turkish cause seemed irrevocably lost, the work of a single brave man to the north of the Balkans dried up, as if by magic, the flood of invasion, brought back victory to the standards of Islam, and bade fair to overwhelm the presumptuous Muscovites in the waters of the Danube. Moltke in his account of the war of 1828 had noted a peculiarity of the Ottomans in warfare (a characteristic which they share with the glorious defenders of Saragossa in 1808) of beginning the real defence when others would abandon it as hopeless. This remark, if not true of the Turkish army as a whole, certainly applies to that part of it which was thrilled to deeds of daring by Osman Pasha.

More fighting had fallen to him, perhaps, than to any Turk of his time. He was now forty years of age; his frame, slight and of middle height, gave no promise of strength or capacity; neither did his face, until the observer noted the power of his eyes to take in the whole situation "with one slow, comprehensive look."[2] This gave him a magnetic faculty, the effect of which was not wholly marred by his disdainful manners, curt speech, and contemptuous treatment of foreigners. Clearly here

[1] Parl. Papers, Turkey, No. 9 (1878), Nos. 2, 3; *With the Russians in Peace and War*, by Colonel the Hon. F. A. Wellesley, ch. xx.

[2] W. W. Herbert, *The Defence of Plevna*, p. 81.

was a cold, sternly objective nature like that of Bonaparte. He was a good representative of the stolid Turk of the provinces, who, far from the debasing influence of the Court, retains the fanaticism and love of war on behalf of his creed that make his people terrible even in the days of decline.[1]

In accordance with the original design of Abdul-Kerim, Osman had for some time remained passive at Widdin. On receiving orders from the commander-in-chief, he moved eastwards on July 13th, with 40,000 men, to save Nicopolis. Finding himself too late to save that place he then laid his plans for the seizure of Plevna. The importance of that town as a great centre of roads, and as possessing many advantages for defence on the hills around, had been previously pointed out to the Russian staff by Prince Charles of Roumania, as indeed, earlier still, by Moltke. Accordingly, the Grand Duke Nicholas had directed a small force of cavalry towards that town. General Krüdener made the mistake of recalling it in order to assist in the attack on Nicopolis on July 14–16, an unlucky move, which enabled Osman to occupy Plevna without resistance on July 19th.[2] On the 18th the Grand Duke Nicholas ordered General Krüdener to occupy Plevna. Knowing nothing of Osman's whereabouts, his vanguard advanced heedlessly on the town, only to meet with a very decided repulse, which cost the Russians 3000 men (July 20th).

Osman now entrenched himself on the open downs that stretch eastwards from Plevna. As will be seen by reference to the map on page 233, his position, roughly speaking, formed an ellipse pointing towards the village of

[1] For these qualities, see *Turkey in Europe*, by "Odysseus," p. 97.
[2] Herbert, *The Defence of Plevna*, p. 129.

Grivitza. Above that village his engineers threw up two great redoubts which dominated the neighbourhood. Other redoubts and trenches screened Plevna on the north-east and south. Finally, the crowns of three main slopes lying to the east of Plevna bristled with defensive works. West of the town lay the deep vale of the little river Wid, itself the chief defence on that side. We may state here that during the long operations against Plevna the Russians had to content themselves with watching this western road to Orkanye and Sophia by means of cavalry; but the reinforcements from Sophia generally made their way in. From that same quarter the Turks were also able to despatch forces to occupy the town of Lovtcha, between Plevna and the Shipka Pass.

The Russian staff, realising its error in not securing this important centre of roads, and dimly surmising the strength of the entrenchments which Osman was throwing up near to the base of their operations, determined to attack Plevna at once. Their task proved to be one of unexpected magnitude. Already the long curve of the outer Turkish lines spread along slopes which formed natural glacis, while the ground farther afield was so cut up by hollows as to render one combined assault very difficult. The strength, and even the existence, of some of Osman's works was unknown. Finally, the Russians are said to have had only 32,000 infantry at hand, with two brigades of cavalry.

Nevertheless, Generals Krüdener and Schahofski received orders to attack forthwith. They did so on July 31st. The latter, with 12,000 men, took two of the outer redoubts on the south side, but had to fall back before the deadly fire that poured on him from the inner works. Krüdener operated against the still stronger positions on

the north; but, owing to difficulties that beset his advance, he was too late to make any diversion in favour of his colleague. In a word, the attack was ill planned and still worse combined. Five hours of desperate fighting yielded the assailants not a single substantial gain; their losses were stated officially to be 7336 killed and wounded; but this is certainly below the truth. Turkish irregulars followed the retreating columns at nightfall, and butchered the wounded, including all whom they found in a field-hospital.

This second reverse at Plevna was a disaster of the first magnitude. The prolongation of the Russian line beyond the Balkans had left their base and flanks too weak to stand against the terrible blows that Osman seemed about to deal from his point of vantage. Plevna was to their right flank what Beila was to their left. Troops could not be withdrawn from the latter point lest the Turks from Shumla and Rustchuk should break through and cut their way to the bridge at Sistova; and now Osman's force threatened that spinal cord of the Russian communications. If he struck, how could the blow be warded off? For bad news poured in from all quarters. From Armenia came the tidings that Mukhtar Pasha, after a skilful retreat and concentration of force, had turned on the Russians and driven them back in utter confusion.

From beyond the Balkans Gurko sent news that Suleiman's army was working round by way of Adrianople, and threatened to pin him to the mountain chain. In fact, part of Gurko's corps sustained a serious reverse at Eski Zagra, and had to retreat in haste through the Hainkoi Pass; while its other sections made their way back to the Shipka Pass, leaving a rearguard to hold that important

position (July 30–August 8). Thus, on all sides, proofs accumulated that the invaders had attempted far too much for their strength, and that their whole plan of campaign was more brilliant than sound. Possibly, had not the 14th corps been thrown away on the unhealthy Dobrudscha, enough men would have been at hand to save the situation. But now everything was at stake.

The whole of the month of August was a time of grave crisis for the Russians, and it is the opinion of the best military critics that the Turks, with a little more initiative and power of combination, might have thrown the Russians back on the Danube in utter disarray. From this extremity the invaders were saved by the lack among the Turks of the above-named gifts, on which, rather than on mere bravery, the issue of campaigns and the fate of nations now ultimately depend. True to their old renown, the Turks showed signal prowess on the field of battle, but they lacked the higher intellectual qualities that garner the full harvest of results.

Osman, either because he knew not that the Russians had used up their last reserves at Plevna, or because he mistrusted the manœuvring powers of his men, allowed Krüdener quietly to draw off his shattered forces towards Sistova, and made only one rather half-hearted move against that all-important point. The new Turkish commander-in-chief, Mehemet Ali, gathered a formidable array in front of Shumla and drove the Russian army, now led by the Czarevitch, back on Beila, but failed to pierce their lines. Finally, Suleiman Pasha, in his pride at driving Gurko through the Hainkoi Pass, wasted time on the southern side, first, by harrying the wretched Bulgarians, and then

by hurling his brave troops repeatedly against the now almost impregnable position on the Shipka Pass.

It is believed that jealousy of the neighbouring Turkish generals kept Suleiman from adopting less wasteful and more effective tactics. If he had made merely a feint of attacking that post, and had hurried with his main body through the Slievno Pass on the east to the aid of Mehemet, or through the western defiles of the Balkans to the help of the brave Osman in his Plevna-Lovtcha positions, probably the gain of force to one or other of them might have led to really great results. As it was, these generals dealt heavy losses to the invaders, but failed to drive them back on the Danube.

Moreover, Russian reinforcements began to arrive by the middle of August, the Emperor having already on July 22nd called out the first ban of the militia and three divisions of the reserve of the line, in all some 224,000 men.[1]

The bulk of these men did not arrive until September; and meanwhile the strain was terrible. The war correspondence of Mr. Archibald Forbes reveals the state of nervous anxiety in which Alexander II. was plunged at this time. Forbes had been a witness of the savage tenacity of the Turkish attack and the Russian defence on the hills commanding the Shipka Pass. Finally, he had shared in the joy of the hard-pressed defenders at the timely advent of a rifle battalion hastily sent up on Cossack ponies, and the decisive charge of General Radetzky at the head of two companies of reserves at a Turkish breastwork in the very crisis of the fight (August 24th). Then, after riding post-haste northwards to the Russian headquarters at Gorni Studen, he was at once taken to the Czar's tent, and noted

[1] F. V. Greene, *The Campaign in Bulgaria*, p. 225.

the look of eager suspense on his face until he heard the reassuring news that Radetzky kept his seat firm on the pass.

The worst was now over. The Russian Guards, 50,000 strong, were near at hand, along with the other reinforcements above named. The urgency of the crisis also led the Grand Duke Nicholas to waive his claim that the Roumanian troops should be placed under his immediate command. Accordingly, early in August, Prince Charles led some 35,000 Roumanians across the Danube, and was charged with the command of all the troops around Plevna.[1] The hopes of the invaders were raised by Skobeleff's capture, on September 3rd, of Lovtcha, a place half-way between Plevna and the Balkans, which had ensured Osman's communications with Suleiman Pasha. The Turkish losses at Lovtcha are estimated at nearly 15,000 men.[2]

This success having facilitated the attack on Plevna from the south, a general assault was ordered for September 11th. In the meantime Osman also had received large reinforcements from Sophia, and had greatly strengthened his defences. So skilfully had outworks been thrown up on the north-east of Plevna that what looked like an unimportant trench was found to be a new and formidable redoubt, which foiled the utmost efforts of the 3rd Roumanian division to struggle up the steep slopes on that side. To their 4th division and to a Russian brigade fell an equally hard task, that of advancing from the east against the two Grivitza redoubts which had defied all assaults. The Turks showed their usual constancy, despite the heavy and prolonged bombardment which preluded the attack here and all along the lines. But the weight and vigour of the

[1] *Reminiscences of the King of Roumania*, p. 275.
[2] F. V. Greene, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

onset told by degrees; and the Russian and Roumanian supports finally carried by storm the more southerly of the two redoubts. The Turks made desperate efforts to retrieve this loss. From the northern redoubt and the rear entrenchments somewhat to the south there came a galling fire which decimated the victors; for a time the Turks succeeded in recovering the work, but at nightfall the advance of other Russian and Roumanian troops ousted the Moslems. Thenceforth the redoubt was held by the allies.

Meanwhile, to the south of the village of Grivitza the 4th and 9th Russian corps had advanced in dense masses against the cluster of redoubts that crowned the heights south-east of Plevna, but their utmost efforts were futile; under the fearful fire of the Turks the most solid lines melted away, and the corps fell back at nightfall, with the loss of 110 officers and 5200 men.

Only on the south and south-west did the assailants seriously imperil Osman's defence at a vital point; and here again Fortune bestowed her favours on a man who knew how to wrest the utmost from her, Michael Dimitrievitch Skobeleff. Few men or women could look on his stalwart figure, frank, bold features, and keen, kindling eyes without a thrill of admiration. Tales were told by the camp-fires of the daring of his early exploits in Central Asia: how, after the capture of Khiva in 1874, he dressed himself in Turkoman garb, and alone explored the route from that city to Igdy, as well as the old bed of the river Oxus; or again, how, at the capture of Khokand in the following year, his skill and daring led to the overthrow of a superior force and the seizure of fifty-eight guns. Thus, at thirty-two years of age he was the darling of the

troops; for his prowess in the field was not more marked than his care and foresight in the camp. While other generals took little heed of their men, he saw to their comfort and cheered them by his jokes. They felt that he was the embodiment of the patriotism, love of romantic exploit, and soaring ambition of the Great Russians.

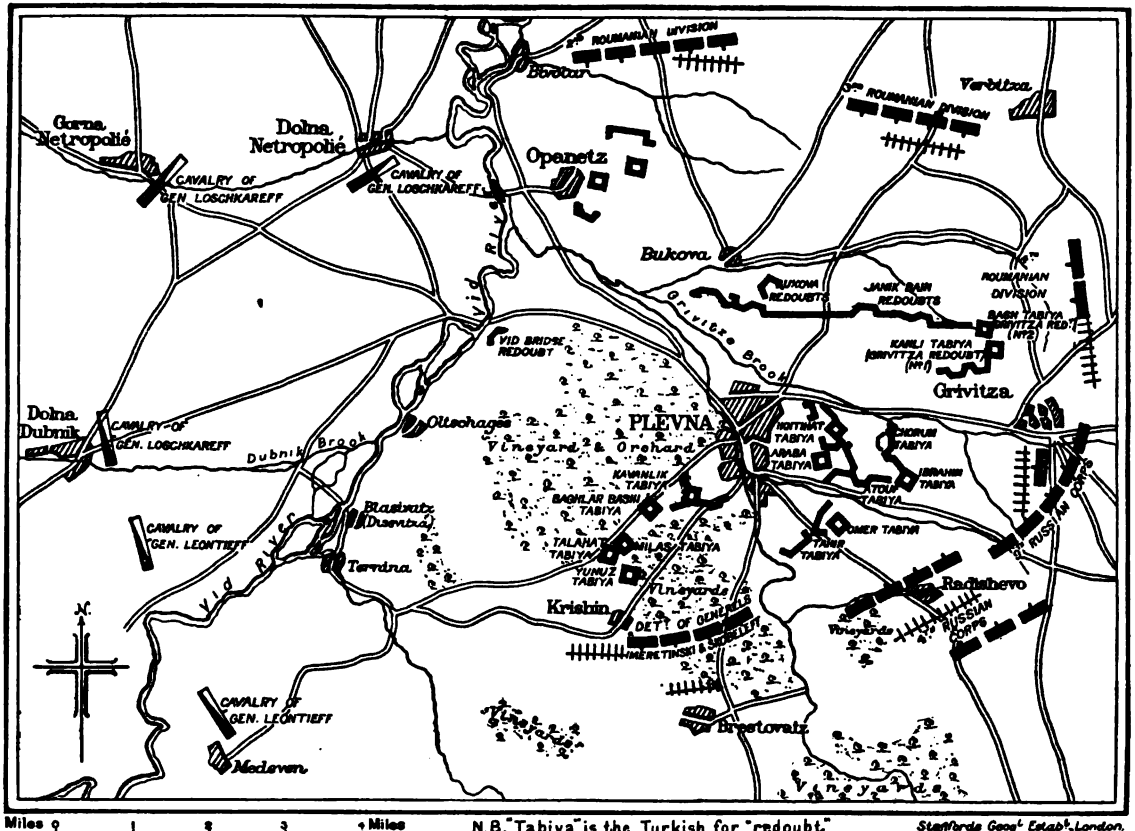
They were right. Already, as will appear in a later chapter, he was dreaming of the conquest of India; and, like Napoleon, he could not only see visions but also master details, from the principles of strategy to the routine of camp life, which made those visions realisable. If ambition spurred him on towards Delhi, hatred of things Teutonic pointed him to Berlin. Ill would it have fared with the peace of the world had this champion of the Slavonic race lived out his life. But his fiery nature wore out its tenement, the baser passions, so it is said, contributing to hasten the end of one who lived his true life only amidst the smoke of battle. In war he was sublime. Having recently come from Central Asia, he was at first unattached to any corps, and roved about in search of the fiercest fighting. His insight and skill had warded off a deadly flank attack on Schahofski's shattered corps at Plevna on July 30th, and his prowess contributed largely to the capture of Lovtcha on September 3rd. War correspondents, who knew their craft, turned to follow Skobeleff, wherever official reports might otherwise direct them; and the lust of fighting laid hold of the grey columns when they saw the "white general" approach.

On September 11th Prince Imeritinski and Skobeleff (the order should be inverted) commanded the extreme left of the Russian line, attacking Plevna from the south. Having four regiments of the line and four battalions of

sharpshooters—about 12,000 men in all—he ranged them at the foot of the hill, whose summit was crowned by an all-important redoubt—the "Kavanlik." There were four others that flanked the approach. When the Russian guns had thoroughly cleared the way for an assault, he ordered the bands to play and the two leading regiments to charge up the slope. Keeping his hand firmly on the pulse of the battle, he saw them begin to waver under the deadly fire of the Turks; at once he sent up a rival regiment; the new mass carried on the charge until it, too, threatened to die away. The fourth regiment struggled up into that wreath of death, and with the like result.

Then Skobeleff called on his sharpshooters to drive home the onset. Riding on horseback before the invigorating lines, he swept on the stragglers and waverers until all of them came under the full blast of the Turkish flames vomited from the redoubt. There his sword fell, shivered in his hand, and his horse rolled over at the very verge of the fosse. Fierce as ever, the leader sprang to his feet, waved the stump in air, and uttered a shout which put fresh heart into his men. With him they swarmed into the fosse, up the bank, and fell on the defenders. The bayonet did the rest, taking deadly revenge for the murderous volleys.

But Osman's engineers had provided against such an event. The redoubt was dominated from the left and could be swept by cross-fire from the rear and right. On the morrow the Turks drew in large forces from the north side and pressed the victors hard. In vain did Skobeleff send urgent messages for reinforcements to make good the gaps in his ranks. None were sent, or, indeed, could be sent. Five times his men beat off the foe. The sixth



253

PLAN OF PLEVNA

charge hurled them first from the Kavanlik redoubt, and thereafter from the flanking works and trenches out on to that fatal slope. A war correspondent saw Skobeleff after this heartbreaking loss, "his face black with powder and smoke, his eyes haggard and bloodshot, and his voice quite gone. I never before saw such a picture of battle." [1]

Thus all the efforts of the Russians and Roumanians had failed to wrest more than a single redoubt from the Moslems; and at that point they were unable to make any advance against the inner works. The fighting of September 11–12 is believed to have cost the allies 18,000 men killed and wounded out of the 75,000 infantrymen engaged. The mistakes of July 31st had been again repeated. The number of assailants was too small for an attack on so great an extent of fortified positions defended with quick-firing rifles. Had the Russians, while making feints at other points to hold the Turks there, concentrated their efforts either on the two Grivitza redoubts, or on those about the Kavanlik work, they would almost certainly have succeeded. As it was, they hurled troops in close order against lines the strength of which was not well known; and none of their commanders but Skobeleff employed tactics that made the most of their forces.[2] The depression at the Russian headquarters was now extreme.[3] On September 13th the Emperor held a council of war at which the Prince of Roumania, the Grand Duke Nicholas, General Milutin (Minister of War) and three other generals were present. The Grand Duke declared

[1] *War Correspondence of the Daily News*, pp. 479–483. For another character-sketch of Skobeleff, see the *Fortnightly Review* of October, 1882, by W. K. Rose.

[2] For an account of the battle, see Greene, *op. cit.*, pt. ii., chap. v.

[3] General von Lignitz, *Aus drei Kriegen*, p. 167.

that the only prudent course was to retire to the Danube, construct a *tête de pont* guarding the southern end of their bridge, and, after receiving reinforcements, again begin the conquest of Bulgaria. General Milutin, however, demurred to this, seeing that Osman's army was not mobile enough to press them hard; he therefore proposed to await the reinforcements in the positions around Plevna. The Grand Duke thereupon testily exclaimed that Milutin had better be placed in command, to which the Emperor replied: "No; you shall retain the command; but the plan suggested by the Minister of War shall be carried out." [1]

The Emperor's decision saved the situation. The Turks made no combined effort to advance towards Plevna in force; and Osman felt too little trust in the new levies that reached him from Sophia to move into the open and attack Sistova. Indeed, Turkish strategy over the whole field of war is open to grave censure. On their side there was a manifest lack of combination. Mehemet Ali pounded away for a month at the army of the Czarevitch on the River Lom, and then drew back his forces (September 24th). He allowed Suleiman Pasha to fling his troops in vain against the natural stronghold of the Russians at the Shipka Pass, and made no dispositions for succouring Lovtcha. Obviously he should have concentrated the Turkish forces so as to deal a timely and decisive blow either on the Lom or on the Sophia-Plevna road. When he proved his incapacity both as commander-in-chief and as commander of his own force, Turkish jealousy against the quondam German flared forth; and early in October he was replaced by Suleiman. The change was greatly for the worse. Suleiman's pride

[1] Col. F. A. Wellesley, *op. cit.*, p. 283.

and obstinacy closed the door against larger ideas, and it has been confidently stated that at the end of the campaign he was bribed by the Russians to betray his cause. However that may be, it is certain that the Turkish generals continued to fight each for his own hand, and thus lost the campaign.

It was now clear that Osman must be starved out from the position which the skill of his engineers and the steadiness of his riflemen had so speedily transformed into an impregnable stronghold. Todleben, the Russian engineer who had strengthened the outworks of Sevastopol, had been called up to oppose trench to trench, redoubt to redoubt. Yet so extensive were the Turkish works, and so active was Shevket Pasha's force at Sophia in sending help and provisions, that not until October 24th was the line of investment completed, and by an army which now numbered fully 120,000 men. By December 10th Osman came to the end of his resources and strove to break out on the west over the River Wid towards Sophia. Masking the movement with great skill, he inflicted heavy losses on the besiegers. Slowly, however, they closed around him, and a last scene of slaughter ended in the surrender of the 43,000 half-starved survivors, with the 77 guns that had wrought such havoc among the invaders. Osman's defence is open to criticism at some points, but it had cost Russia more than 50,000 lives, and paralysed her efforts in Europe during five months.

The operations around Plevna are among the most instructive in modern warfare, as illustrating the immense power that quick-firing rifles confer upon the defence. Given a nucleus of well-trained troops, with skilled engineers, any position of ordinary strength can quickly be

turned into a stronghold that will foil the efforts of a far greater number of assailants. Experience at Plevna showed that four or five times as many men were needed to attack redoubts and trenches as in the days of muzzle-loading muskets. It also proved that infantry fire is far more deadly in such cases than the best-served artillery. And yet a large part of Osman's troops—perhaps the majority after August—were not regulars. Doubtless that explains why (with the exception of an obstinate but unskilful effort to break out on August 31st) he did not attack the Russians in the open after his great victories of July 31st and September 11–12. On both occasions the Russians were so badly shaken that, in the opinion of competent judges, they could easily have been driven in on Nicopolis or Sistova, in which case the bridges at those places might have been seized. But Osman did not do so, doubtless because he knew that his force, weak in cavalry and unused to manœuvring, would be at a disadvantage in the open. Todleben, however, was informed on good authority that, when the Turkish commander heard of the likelihood of the investment of Plevna, he begged the Porte to allow him to retire; but the assurance of Shevket Pasha, the commander of the Turkish force at Sophia, that he could keep open communications between that place and Plevna, decided the authorities at Constantinople to order the continuance of defensive tactics.[1]

Whatever may have been the cause of this decision it ruined the Turkish campaign. Adherence to the defensive spells defeat now, as it has always done. Defeat comes

[1] A. Forbes, *Czar and Sultan*, p. 291. On the other hand, W. V. Herbert (*op. cit.*, p. 456) states that it was Osman's wish to retire to Orkanye, on the road to Sophia, and that this was forbidden. For remarks on this, see Greene, *op. cit.*, chap. viii.

more slowly, now that quick-firing rifles quadruple the power of the defence; but all the same it must come if the assailant has enough men to throw on that point and then at other points. Or, to use technical terms, while modern inventions alter tactics, that is, the dispositions of troops on the field of battle—a fact which the Russians seemed to ignore at Plevna—they do not change the fundamental principles of strategy. These are practically immutable, and they doom to failure the side that, at the critical points, persists in standing on the defensive. A study of the events around Plevna shows clearly what a brave but ill-trained army can do and what it cannot do under modern conditions.

From the point of view of strategy—that is, the conduct of the great operations of a campaign—Osman's defence of Plevna yields lessons of equal interest. It affords the most brilliant example in modern warfare of the power of a force strongly intrenched in a favourable position to "contain," that is, to hold or hold back, a greater force of the enemy. Other examples are the Austrian defence of Mantua in 1796–97, which hindered the young Bonaparte's invasion of the Hapsburg States; Bazaine's defence of Metz in 1870; and Sir George White's defence of Ladysmith against the Boers. We have no space in which to compare these cases, in which the conditions varied so greatly. Suffice it to say that Mantua and Plevna were the most effective instances, largely because those strongholds lay near the most natural and easy line of advance for the invaders. Metz and Ladysmith possessed fewer advantages in this respect; and, considering the strength of the fortress and the size and quality of his army, Bazaine's conduct at Metz must rank as the weakest on record, for his 180,000

troops "contained" scarcely more than their own number of Germans.

On the other hand, Osman's force brought three times its number of Russians to a halt for five months before hastily constructed lines. In the opinion of many authorities the Russians did wrong in making the whole campaign depend on Plevna. When it was clear that Osman would cling to the defensive, they might with safety have secretly detached part of the besieging force to help the army of the Czarevitch to drive back the Turks on Shumla. This would have involved no great risk; for the Russians occupied the inner lines of what was, roughly speaking, a triangle, resting on the Shipka Pass, the River Lom, and Plevna as its extreme points. Having the advantage of the inner position, they could quickly have moved part of their force at Plevna, battered in the Turkish defence on the Lom, and probably captured the Slievno passes. In that case they would have cleared a new line of advance to Constantinople farther to the east, and made the possession of Plevna of little worth. Its value always lay in its nearness to their main line of advance, but they were not tied to that line. It is safe to say that, if Moltke had directed their operations, he would have devised some better plan than that of hammering away at the redoubts of Plevna.

In fact, the Russians made three great blunders: first, in neglecting to occupy Plevna betimes; second, in underrating Osman's powers of defence; third, in concentrating all their might on what was a very strong, but not an essential, point of the campaign.

The closing scenes of the war are of little interest except in the domain of diplomacy. Servia having declared war against Turkey immediately after the fall of Plevna, the

Turks were now hopelessly outnumbered. Gurko forced his way over one of the western passes of the Balkans, seized Sophia (January 4, 1878), and, advancing quickly towards Philippopolis, utterly routed Suleiman's main force near that town (January 17th). The Turkish commander-in-chief thus paid for his mistake in seeking to defend a mountain chain with several passes by distributing his army among those passes. Experience has proved that this invites disaster at the hands of an enterprising foe, and that the true policy is to keep light troops or scouts at all points, and the main forces at a chief central pass and at a convenient place in the rear, whence the invaders may be readily assailed before they complete the crossing. As it was, Suleiman saw his main force, still nearly 50,000 strong, scatter over the Rhodope Mountains; many of them reached the Ægean Sea at Enos, whence they were conveyed by ship to the Dardanelles. He himself was tried by court-martial and imprisoned for fifteen years.[1]

A still worse fate befell those of his troops which hung about Radetzky's front below the Shipka Pass. The Russians devised skilful moves for capturing this force. On January 5–8, Prince Mirsky threaded his way with a strong column through the deep snows of the Travna Pass, about twenty-five miles east of the Shipka, which he then approached, while Skobeleff struggled through a still more difficult defile west of the central position. The total strength of the Russians was 56,000 men. On the 8th, when their cannon were heard thundering in the rear of the Turkish earthworks at the foot of the Shipka Pass,

[1] Sir N. Layard attributed to him the overthrow of Turkey. See his letter of February 1, 1878, in *Sir W. White: Life and Correspondence*, p. 127.

Radetzky charged down on the Turkish positions in front, while Mirsky assailed them from the east. Skobeleff meanwhile had been detained by the difficulties of the path and the opposition of the Turks on the west. But on the morrow his onset on the main Turkish positions carried all before it. On all sides the Turks were worsted and laid down their arms; 36,000 prisoners and 93 guns (so the Russians claim) were the prize of this brilliant feat (January 9, 1878).[1]

In Roumelia, as in Armenia, there now remained comparatively few Turkish troops to withstand the Russian advance, and the capture of Constantinople seemed to be a matter of a few weeks. There are grounds for thinking that the British Ministry, or certainly its chief, longed to send troops from Malta to help in its defence. Colonel Wellesley, British attaché at the Russian headquarters, returned to London at the time when the news of the crossing of the Balkans reached the Foreign Office. At once he was summoned to see the Prime Minister, who inquired eagerly as to the length of time which would elapse before the Russians occupied Adrianople. The officer thought that that event might occur within a month—an estimate which proved to be above the mark. Lord Beaconsfield was deeply concerned to hear this, and added, "If you can only guarantee me six weeks, I see my way." He did not further explain his meaning; but Colonel Wellesley felt sure that he wished to move British troops from Malta to Constantinople.[2] Fortunately the

[1] Greene, *op. cit.*, chap. xi. I have been assured by an Englishman serving with the Turks that these numbers were greatly exaggerated.

[2] *With the Russians in Peace and War*, by Col. F. A. Wellesley, p. 272.

Russian advance to Adrianople was so speedy—their vanguard entered that city on January 20th—as to dispose of any such project. But it would seem that only the utter collapse of the Turkish defence put an end to the plans of part at least of the British Cabinet for an armed intervention on behalf of Turkey.

Here, then, as at so many points of their history, the Turks lost their opportunity, and that, too, through the incapacity and corruption of their governing class. The war of 1877 ended as so many of their wars had ended. Thanks to the bravery of their rank and file and the mistake of the invaders, they gained tactical successes at some points; but they failed to win the campaign owing to the inability of their Government to organise soundly on a great scale and the intellectual mediocrity of their commanders in the sphere of strategy. Mr. Layard, who succeeded Sir Henry Elliott at Constantinople early in 1878, had good reason for writing, "The utter rottenness of the present system has been fully revealed by the present war." [1] Whether Suleiman was guilty of perverse obstinacy, or, as has often been asserted, of taking bribes from the Russians, cannot be decided. What is certain is that he was largely responsible for the final *débacle*.

But in a wider and deeper sense the Turks owed their misfortunes to themselves—to their customs and their creed. Success in war depends ultimately on the brain-power of the chief leaders and organisers; and that source of strength has long ago been dried up in Turkey by adhesion to a sterilising creed and cramping traditions. The wars of the latter half of the nineteenth century are of

[1] *Sir William White: Life and Correspondence*, p. 128.

unique interest, not only because they have built up the great national fabrics of to-day, but also because they illustrate the truth of that suggestive remark of the great Napoleon: "The general who does great things is he who also possesses qualities adapted for civil life."

CHAPTER IX

THE BALKAN SETTLEMENT

"New hopes should animate the world; new light
Should dawn from new revealings to a race
Weighed down so long, forgotten so long."
—ROBERT BROWNING, *Paracelsus.*

THE collapse of the Turkish defence in Roumelia inaugurated a time of great strain and stress in Anglo-Russian relations. On December 13, 1877, that is, three days after the fall of Plevna, Lord Derby reminded the Russian Government of its promise of May 30, 1876, that the acquisition of Constantinople was excluded from the wishes and intentions of the Emperor Alexander II., and expressed the earnest hope that the Turkish capital would not be occupied, even for military purposes. The reply of the Russian Chancellor (December 16th) was reserved. It claimed that Russia must have full right of action, which is the right of every belligerent, and closed with a request for a clearer definition of the British interests which would be endangered by such a step. In his answer of January 13, 1878, the British Foreign Minister specified the occupation of the Dardanelles as an event that would endanger the good relations between England and Russia; whereupon Prince Gortchakoff on January 16, 1878, gave the assurance that this step would not be taken unless British forces were landed at Gallipoli, or Turkish troops were concentrated there.

So far this was satisfactory; but other signs seemed to betoken a resolve on the part of Russia to gain time while her troops pressed on towards Constantinople. The return of the Czar to St. Petersburg after the fall of Plevna had left more power in the hands of the Grand Duke Nicholas and of the many generals who longed to revenge themselves for the disasters in Bulgaria by seizing Constantinople.

In face of the probability of this event, public opinion in England underwent a complete change. Russia appeared no longer as the champion of oppressed Christians, but as an ambitious and grasping Power. Mr. Gladstone's impassioned appeals for non-intervention lost their effect, and a warlike feeling began to prevail. The change of feeling was perfectly natural. Even those who claimed that the war might have been averted, by the adoption of a different policy by the Beaconsfield Cabinet, had to face the facts of the situation; and these were extremely grave.

The alarm increased when it was known that Turkey, on January 3, 1878, had appealed to the Powers for their mediation, and that Germany had ostentatiously refused. It seemed probable that Russia, relying on the support of Germany, would endeavour to force her own terms on the Porte. Lord Loftus, British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, was therefore charged to warn the Ministers of the Czar (January 16th) that any treaty made separately between Russia and Turkey, which affected the international treaties of 1856 and 1871, would not be valid without the consent of all the signatory Powers. Four days later the Muscovite vanguard entered Adrianople, and it appeared likely that peace would soon be dictated at Constantinople without regard to the interests of Great Britain and Austria.

Such was the general position when Parliament met at Westminster on January 17th. The Queen's Speech contained the significant phrase that, should hostilities be unfortunately prolonged, some unexpected occurrence might render it incumbent to adopt measures of precaution. Five days later it transpired that the Sultan had sent an appeal to Queen Victoria for her mediation with a view to arranging an armistice and the discussion of the preliminaries of peace. In accordance with this appeal, the Queen telegraphed to the Emperor of Russia in these terms:

"I have received a direct appeal from the Sultan which I cannot leave without an answer. Knowing that you are sincerely desirous of peace, I do not hesitate to communicate this fact to you, in hope that you may accelerate the negotiations for the conclusion of an armistice which may lead to an honourable peace."

This communication was sent with the approval of the Cabinet. The nature of the reply is not known. Probably it was not encouraging, for on the next day (January 23rd) the British Admiralty ordered Admiral Hornby with the Mediterranean fleet to steam up the Dardanelles to Constantinople. On the following day this was annulled, and the Admiral was directed not to proceed beyond Besika Bay.[1] The original order was the cause of the resignation of Lord Carnarvon. The retirement of Lord Derby was also announced, but he afterwards withdrew it, probably on condition that the fleet did not enter the Sea of Marmora.

Light was thus thrown on the dissensions in the Cabinet, and the vacillations in British policy. Disraeli once said in

[1] For the odd mistake in a telegram, which caused the original order, see *Sir Stafford Northcote, Earl of Iddesleigh*, by Andrew Lang, ii., pp. 111–112.

his whimsical way that there were six parties in the Ministry. The first party wanted immediate war with Russia; the second was for war in order to save Constantinople; the third was for peace at any price; the fourth would let the Russians take Constantinople and *then* turn them out; the fifth wanted to plant the cross on the dome of St. Sophia; "and then there are the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who desire to see something done, but don't know exactly what." [1] The coupling of himself with the amiable Sir Stafford Northcote is a good instance of Disraelian irony. It is fairly certain that he was for war with Russia; that Lord Carnarvon constituted the third party, and Lord Derby the fourth.

On the day after the resignation of Lord Carnarvon, the British Cabinet heard for the first time what were the demands of Russia. They included the formation of a Greater Bulgaria, "within the limits of the Bulgarian nationality," practically independent of the Sultan's direct control; the entire independence of Roumania, Servia, and Montenegro; a territorial and pecuniary indemnity to Russia for the expenses of the war; and "an ulterior understanding for safe-guarding the rights and interests of Russia in the Straits."

The extension of Bulgaria to the shores of the Ægean seemed at that time a mighty triumph for Russian influence; but it was the last item, vaguely foreshadowing the extension of Russian influence to the Dardanelles, that most aroused the alarm of the British Cabinet. Russian control of those Straits would certainly have endangered

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 105–106. For the telegrams between the First Lord of the Admiralty, W. H. Smith, and Admiral Hornby, see *Life and Times of W. H. Smith*, by Sir H. Maxwell, i., chap. xi.

Britain's connexions with India by way of the Suez Canal, seeing that we then had no foothold in Egypt. Accordingly, on January 28th, the Ministry proposed to Parliament the voting of an additional sum of £6,000,000 towards increasing the armaments of the country. At once there arose strong protests against this proposal, especially from the districts then suffering from the prolonged depression of trade. The outcry was very natural; but none the less it can scarcely be justified in view of the magnitude of the British interests then at stake. Granted that the views of the Czar were pacific, those of his generals at the seat of war were very much open to question.[1] The long-coveted prize of Constantinople, or the Dardanelles, was likely to tempt them to disregard official orders from St. Petersburg unless they knew that any imprudent step would bring on a European war. In any case, the vote of £6,000,000 was a precautionary measure; and it probably had the effect of giving pause to the enthusiasts at the Russian headquarters.

The preliminary bases of peace between Russia and Turkey were signed at Adrianople (January 31st) on the terms summarised above, except that the Czar's Minister now withdrew the obnoxious clause about the Straits. A line of demarcation was also agreed on between the hostile forces: it passed from Derkos, a lake near the Black Sea, to the north of Constantinople, in a southerly direction by

[1] See the compromising revelations made by an anonymous Russian writer in the *Revue de Paris* for July 15, 1897. The authoress, "O. K.," in her book *The Friends and Foes of Russia* (pp. 240–241), states that only the autocracy could have stayed the Russian advance on Constantinople. General U. S. Grant told her that if he had had such an order, he would have put it in his pocket and produced it again when in Constantinople.

the banks of the Karasou stream as far as the Sea of Marmora. This gave to the Russians the lines of Tchekmedje, the chief natural defence of Constantinople, and they occupied this position on February 6th. This fact was reported by Mr. Layard, Sir Henry Elliot's successor at Constantinople, in alarmist terms, and it had the effect of stilling the opposition at Westminster to the vote of credit. Though official assurances of a reassuring kind came from Prince Gortchakoff at St. Petersburg, the British Ministry on February 7th ordered a part of the Mediterranean fleet to enter the Sea of Marmora for the defence of British interests and the protection of British subjects at Constantinople. The Czar's Government thereupon declared that if the British fleet steamed up the Bosporus, Russian troops would enter Constantinople for the protection of the Christian population.

This rivalry in philanthropic zeal was not pushed to its logical issue, war. The British fleet stopped short of the Bosporus, but within sight of the Russian lines. True, these were pushed eastwards slightly beyond the limits agreed on with the Turks; but an arrangement was arrived at between Lord Derby and Prince Gortchakoff (February 19th) that the Russians would not occupy the lines of Bulair close to Constantinople, or the Peninsula of Gallipoli commanding the Dardanelles, provided that British forces were not landed in that important strait.[1] So matters rested, both sides regarding each other with the sullenness of impotent wrath. As Bismarck said, a war would have been a fight between an elephant and a whale.

The situation was further complicated by an invasion of Thessaly by the Greeks (February 3rd); but they were

[1] Hertslet, iv., p. 2670.

withdrawn at once on the urgent remonstrance of the Powers, coupled with a promise that the claims of Greece would be favourably considered at the general peace.[1]

In truth, all the racial hatreds, aspirations, and ambitions that had so long been pent up in the south-east of Europe now seemed on the point of bursting forth and overwhelming civilisation in a common ruin. Just as the earth's volcanic forces now and again threaten to tear their way through the crust, so now the immemorial feuds of Moslems and Christians, of Greeks, Servians, Bulgars, Wallachs, and Turks, promised to desolate the slopes of the Balkans of Rhodope, and the Pindus, and to spread the lava tide of war over the half of the Continent. The Russians and Bulgars, swarming over Roumelia, glutted their revenge for past defeats and massacres by outrages well-nigh as horrible as that of Batak. At once the fierce Moslems of the Rhodope Mountains rose in self-defence or for vengeance. And while the Russian eagles perforce checked their flight within sight of Stamboul, the Greeks and Armenians of that capital, nay, the very occupants of the foreign embassies, trembled at sight of the lust of blood that seized on the vengeful Ottomans.

Nor was this all. Far away beyond the northern horizon the war cloud hung heavily over the Carpathians. The statesmen of Vienna, fearing that the terms of their bargain with Russia were now forgotten in the intoxication of her triumph, determined to compel the victors to lay their spoils before the Great Powers. In haste the Austrian and Hungarian troops took station on the great bastion of the Carpathians, and began to exert on the military situation

[1] L. Sergeant, *Greece in the Nineteenth Century* (1897), ch. xi.

the pressure which had been so fatal to Russia in her Turkish campaign of 1854.

But though everything betokened war, there were forces that worked slowly but surely for a pacific settlement. However threatening was the attitude of Russia, her rulers really desired peace. The war had shown once again the weakness of that Power for offence. Her strength lies in her boundless plains, in the devotion of her millions of peasants to the Czar, and in the patient, stubborn strength which is the outcome of long centuries of struggle with the yearly tyrant, winter. Her weakness lies in the selfishness, frivolity, corruption, and narrowness of outlook of her governing class—in short, in their incapacity for organisation. Against the steady resisting power of her peasants the great Napoleon had hurled his legions in vain. That campaign of 1812 exhibited the strength of Russia for defence. But when, in fallacious trust in that precedent, she had undertaken great wars far from her base, failure has nearly always been the result. The pathetic devotion of her peasantry has not made up for the mental and moral defects of her governing classes. This fact had fixed itself on every competent observer in 1877. The Emperor Alexander knew it only too well. Now, early in 1878, it was fairly certain that his army would succumb under the frontal attacks of Turks and British, and the onset of the Austrians on their rear.

Therefore when, on February 4th, the Hapsburg State proposed to refer the terms of peace to a Conference of the Powers at Vienna, the consent of Russia was almost certain, provided that the prestige of the Czar remained unimpaired. Three days later the place of meeting was changed to Berlin, the Conference also becoming a

Congress, that is, a meeting where the chief Ministers of the Powers, not merely their Ambassadors, would take part. The United Kingdom, France, and Italy at once signified their assent to this proposal. As for Bismarck, he promised in a speech to the Reichstag (February 19th) that he would act as an "honest broker" between the parties most nearly concerned. There is little doubt that Russia took this in a sense favourable to her claims, and she, too, consented.

Nevertheless, she sought to tie the hands of the Congress by binding Turkey to a preliminary treaty signed on March 3rd at San Stefano, a village near to Constantinople. The terms comprised those stated above (p. 269), but they also stipulated the cession of frontier districts to Servia and Montenegro, while Russia was to acquire the Roumanian districts east of the river Pruth, Roumania receiving the Dobrudscha as an equivalent. Most serious of all was the erection of Bulgaria into an almost independent Principality, extending nearly as far south as Midia (on the Black Sea), Adrianople, Salonica, and beyond Ochrida in Albania. As will be seen by reference to the map (p. 287), this Principality would then have comprised more than half of the Balkan Peninsula, besides including districts on the Ægean Sea and around the town of Monastir, for which the Greeks have never ceased to cherish hopes. A Russian Commissioner was to supervise the formation of the government for two years; all the fortresses on the Danube were to be razed, and none others constructed; Turkish forces were required entirely to evacuate the Principality, which was to be occupied by Russian troops for a space of time not exceeding two years.

On her side, Turkey undertook to grant reforms to the Armenians, and protect them from Kurds and Circassians.

Russia further claimed 1,410,000,000 roubles as war indemnity, but consented to take the Dobrudscha district (offered to Roumania, as stated above), and in Asia the territories of Batoum, Kars, Ardahan, and Bayazid, in lieu of 1,100,000,000 roubles. The Porte afterwards declared that it signed this treaty under persistent pressure from the Grand Duke Nicholas and General Ignatieff, who again and again declared that otherwise the Russians would advance on the capital.[1]

At once, from all parts of the Balkan Peninsula, there arose a chorus of protests against the Treaty of San Stefano. The Mohammedans of the proposed State of Bulgaria protested against subjection to their former helots. The Greeks saw in the treaty the death-blow to their hopes of gaining the northern coasts of the Ægean and a large part of central Macedonia. They fulminated against the Bulgarians as ignorant peasants, whose cause had been taken up recently by Russia for her own aggrandisement.[2] The Servians were equally indignant. They claimed, and with justice, that their efforts against the Turks should be rewarded by an increase of territory which would unite to them their kinsfolk in Macedonia and part of Bosnia, and place them on an equality with the upstart State of Bulgaria. Whereas the treaty assigned to these protégés of Russia districts inhabited solely by Servians, thereby barring the way to any extension of that Principality.

Still more urgent was the protest of the Roumanian

[1] For the text of the treaty, see Parl. Papers, Turkey, No. 22 (1878); also *The European Concert in the Eastern Question*, by T. E. Holland, pp. 335–348.

[2] Parl. Papers, Turkey, No. 31 (1878), Nos. 6–17, and enclosures; *L'Hellenisme et la Macédonie*, by N. Kasasis (Paris, 1904); L. Sergeant, *op. cit.*, ch. xii.

Government. In return for the priceless services rendered by his troops at Plevna, Prince Charles and his Ministers were kept in the dark as to the terms arranged between Russia and Turkey. The Czar sent General Ignatieff to prepare the Prince for the news, and sought to mollify him by the hint that he might become also Prince of Bulgaria, a suggestion which was scornfully waved aside. The Government at Bukharest first learned the full truth as to the Bessarabia - Dobrudscha exchange from the columns of the *Journal du St. Pétersbourg*, which proved that the much-prized Bessarabian territory was to be bargained away by the Power which had solemnly undertaken to uphold the integrity of the Principality. The Prince, the Cabinet, and the people unanimously inveighed against this proposal. On February 4th the Roumanian Chamber of Deputies declared that Roumania would defend its territory to the last, by armed force if necessary; but it soon appeared that none of the Powers took any interest in the matter, and, thanks to the prudence of Prince Charles, the proud little nation gradually schooled itself to accept the inevitable.[1]

The peace of Europe now turned on the question whether the Treaty of San Stefano would be submitted as a whole to the Congress of the Powers at Berlin; England claimed that it must be so submitted. This contention, in its extreme form, found no support from any of the Powers, not even from Austria, and it met with firm opposition from Russia. She, however, assured the Viennese Court that the Congress would decide which of the San Stefano terms affected the interests of Europe and would pronounce on

[1] Parl. Papers, Turkey, No. 30 (1878); also *Reminiscences of the King of Roumania*, chaps. x., xi.

them. The Beaconsfield Cabinet later on affirmed that "every article in the treaty between Russia and Turkey will be placed before the Congress—not necessarily for acceptance, but in order that it may be considered what articles require acceptance or concurrence by the several Powers and what do not." [1]

When this much was conceded, there remained no irreconcilable difference, unless the treaty contained secret articles which Russia claimed to keep back from the Congress. As far as we know, there were none. But the fact is that the dispute, small as it now appears to us, was intensified by the suspicions and resentment prevalent on both sides. The final decision of the St. Petersburg Government was couched in somewhat curt and threatening terms: "It leaves to the other Powers the liberty of raising such questions at the Congress as they may think it fit to discuss, and reserves to itself the liberty of accepting, or not accepting, the discussion of these questions." [2]

This haughty reply, received at Downing Street on March 27th, again brought the two States to the verge of war. Lord Beaconsfield, and all his colleagues but one, determined to make immediate preparations for the outbreak of hostilities, while Lord Derby, clinging to the belief that peace would be best preserved by ordinary negotiations, resigned the portfolio for foreign affairs (March 28th); two days later he was succeeded by the Marquis of Salisbury.[3] On April 1st the Prime Minister gave notice of motion that the reserves of the army and

[1] Lord Derby to Sir H. Elliot, March 13, 1878. Parl. Papers, Turkey, No. 24 (1878), No. 9, p. 5.

[2] *Ibid.*, No. 15, p. 7.

[3] See the close of the chapter for Lord Derby's further reason for resigning.

militia should be called out; and on the morrow Lord Salisbury published a note for despatch to foreign courts summarising the grounds of British opposition to the Treaty of San Stefano, and to Russia's contentions respecting the Congress.

Events took a still more threatening turn fifteen days later, when the Government ordered eight Indian regiments, along with two batteries of artillery, to proceed at once to Malta. The measure aroused strong differences of opinion, some seeing in it a masterly stroke which revealed the greatness of Britain's resources, while the more nervous of the Liberal watch-dogs bayed forth their fears that it was the beginning of a Strafford-like plot for undermining the liberties of England.

So sharp were the differences of opinion in England, that Russia would perhaps have disregarded the threats of the Beaconsfield Ministry had she not been face to face with a hostile Austria. The great aim of the Czar's Government was to win over the Dual Monarchy by offering a share of the spoils of Turkey. Accordingly, General Ignatieff went on a mission to the continental courts, especially to that of Vienna, and there is little doubt that he offered Bosnia to the Hapsburg Power. That was the least which Francis Joseph and Count Andrassy had the right to expect, for the secret compact made before the war promised them as much. In view of the enormous strides contemplated by Russia, they now asked for certain rights in connexion with Servia and Montenegro, and commercial privileges that would open a way to Salonica.[1] But Russia's aims, as expressed at San Stefano, clearly were to dominate the Greater Bulgaria there foreshadowed, which would

[1] Débidour, *Hist. diplomatique de l'Europe*, ii., p. 515.

probably shut out Austria from political and commercial influence over the regions north of Salonica. Ignatieff's effort to gain over Austria therefore failed; and it was doubtless Lord Beaconsfield's confidence in the certainty of Hapsburg support in case of war that prompted his defiance alike of Russia and of the Liberal party at home.

The Czar's Government also was well aware of the peril of arousing a European war. Nihilism lifted its head threateningly at home; and the Russian troops before Constantinople were dying like flies in autumn. The outrages committed by them and the Bulgarians on the Moslems of Roumelia had, as we have seen, led to a revolt in the district of Mount Rhodope; and there was talk in some quarters of making a desperate effort to cut off the invaders from the Danube.[1] The discontent of the Roumanians might have been worked upon so as still further to endanger the Russian communications. Probably the knowledge of these plans and of the warlike preparations of Great Britain induced the Russian Government to moderate its tone. On April 9th it expressed a wish that Lord Salisbury would formulate a definite policy.

The new Foreign Minister speedily availed himself of this offer; and the cause of peace was greatly furthered by secret negotiations which he carried on with Count Shuvaloff. The Russian Ambassador in London had throughout bent his great abilities to a pacific solution of the dispute

[1] For these outrages, see Parl. Papers, Turkey (1878), Nos. 42 and 45, with numerous enclosures. The larger plans of the Rhodope insurgents and their abettors at Constantinople are not fully known. An Englishman, Sinclair, and some other free-lances were concerned in the affair. The Rhodope district long retained a kind of independence; see *Les Evènements politiques en Bulgarie*, by A. G. Drandar, Appendix.

and, on finding out the real nature of the British objections to the San Stefano Treaty, he proceeded to St. Petersburg to persuade the Emperor to accept certain changes. In this he succeeded, and on his return to London was able to come to an agreement with Lord Salisbury (May 30th), the chief terms of which clearly foreshadowed those finally adopted at Berlin.

In effect they were as follows: The Beaconsfield Cabinet strongly objected to the proposed wide extension of Bulgaria at the expense of other nationalities, and suggested that the districts south of the Balkans, which were peopled almost wholly by Bulgarians, should not be wholly withdrawn from Turkish control, but "should receive a large measure of administrative self-government . . . with a Christian governor." To these proposals the Russian Government gave a conditional assent. Lord Salisbury further claimed that the Sultan should have the right "to canton troops on the frontiers of southern Bulgaria"; and that the militia of that province should be commanded by officers appointed by the Sultan with the consent of Europe. England also undertook to see that the cause of the Greeks in Thessaly and Epirus received the attention of all the Powers, in place of the intervention of Russia alone on their behalf, as specified in the San Stefano Treaty.

Respecting the cession of Roumanian Bessarabia to Russia, on which the Emperor Alexander had throughout insisted (see page 250), England expressed "profound regret" at that demand, but undertook not to dispute it at the Congress. On his side the Emperor Alexander consented to restore Bayazid in Asia Minor to the Turks, but insisted on the retention of Batoum, Kars, and Ardahan. Great Britain acceded to this, but hinted that the defence

of Turkey in Asia would thenceforth rest especially upon her—a hint to prepare Russia for the Cyprus Convention.

For at this time the Beaconsfield Cabinet had been treating secretly with the Sublime Porte. When Lord Salisbury found out that Russia would not abate her demands for Batoum, Ardahan, and Kars, he sought to safeguard British interests in the Levant by acquiring complete control over the island of Cyprus. His final instructions to Mr. Layard to that effect were telegraphed on May 30th, that is, on the very day on which peace with Russia was practically assured.[1] The Porte, unaware of the fact that there was little fear of the renewal of hostilities, agreed to the secret Cyprus Convention on June 4th; while Russia, knowing little or nothing as to Britain's arrangement with the Porte, acceded to the final arrangements for the discussion of Turkish affairs at Berlin. It is not surprising that this manner of doing business aroused great irritation both at St. Petersburg and Constantinople. Count Shuvaloff's behaviour at the Berlin Congress when the news came out proclaimed to the world that he considered himself tricked by Lord Beaconsfield; while that statesman disdainfully sipped nectar of delight that rarely comes to the lips even of the gods of diplomacy.

The terms of the Cyprus Convention were to the effect that, if Russia retained the three districts in Asia Minor named above, or any of them (as it was perfectly certain that she would); or if she sought to take possession of any further Turkish territory in Asia Minor, Great Britain would help the Sultan by force of arms. He, on his side, assigned to Great Britain the island of Cyprus, to be occupied and administered by her. He further promised

[1] Parl. Papers, Turkey, No. 36 (1878). See, too, *ibid.*, No. 43.

"to introduce necessary reforms, to be agreed upon later between the two Powers, into the government, and for the protection of the Christian and other subjects of the Porte in these territories." On July 1st Britain also covenanted to pay to the Porte the surplus of revenue over expenditure in Cyprus, calculated upon the average of the last five years, and to restore Cyprus to Turkey if Russia gave up Kars and her other acquisitions.[1]

Fortified by the secret understanding with Russia, and by the equally secret compact with Turkey, the British Government could enter the Congress of the Powers at Berlin with complete equanimity. It is true that news as to the agreement with Russia came out in a London newspaper which at once published a general description of the Anglo-Russian agreement of May 30th; and when the correctness of the news was stoutly denied by ministers, the original deed was given to the world by the same newspaper on June 14th; but again vigorous disclaimers and denials were given from the ministerial bench in Parliament.[2] Thus, when Lords Beaconsfield and Salisbury proceeded to Berlin for the opening of the Congress (June 13th), they were believed to hold the destinies of the British Empire in their hands, and the world waited with bated breath for the scraps of news that came from that centre of diplomacy.

On various details there arose sharp differences which the tactful humour of the German Chancellor could scarcely set at rest. The fate of nations seemed to waver in the

[1] Parl. Papers, Turkey, No. 36 (1878); Hertslet, iv., pp. 2722–2725; Holland, *op. cit.*, pp. 354–356.

[2] Mr. Charles Marvin, a clerk in the Foreign Office, was charged with this offence, but the prosecution failed (July 16th) owing to lack of sufficient evidence

balance when Prince Gortchakoff gathered up his maps and threatened to hurry from the room, or when Lord Beaconsfield gave pressing orders for a special train to take him back to Calais; but there seemed good grounds for regarding these incidents rather as illustrative of character, or of the electioneering needs of a sensational age, than as throes in the birth of nationalities. The "Peace with honour," which the Prime Minister on his return announced at Charing Cross to an admiring crowd, had virtually been secured at Downing Street before the end of May respecting all the great points in dispute between England and Russia.

We know little about the inner history of the Congress of Berlin, which is very different from the official protocols that half reveal and half conceal its debates. One fact and one incident claim attention as serving to throw curious side-lights on policy and character respectively. The Emperor William had been shot at and severely wounded by a socialist fanatic, Dr. Nobiling, on June 2, 1878, and during the whole time of the Congress the Crown Prince Frederick acted as regent of the Empire. Limited as his powers were by law, etiquette, and Bismarck, he is said to have used them on behalf of Austria and England. The old Emperor thought so; for in a moment of confiding indiscretion he hinted to the Princess Radziwill (a Russian by birth) that Russian interests would have fared better at Berlin had he then been steering the ship of State.[1] Possibly this explains why Bismarck always maintained that he had done what he could for his Eastern neighbour, and that he really deserved a Russian decoration for his services during the Congress.

[1] Princess Radziwill, *My Recollections* (Eng. edit., 1900), p. 91.

The incident, which flashes a search-light into character and discloses the *recherché* joys of statecraft, is also described in the sprightly Memoirs of Princess Radziwill. She was present at a brilliant reception held on the evening of the day when the Cyprus Convention had come to light. Diplomatists and generals were buzzing eagerly and angrily when the Earl of Beaconsfield appeared. A slight hush came over the wasp-like clusters as he made his way among them, noting everything with his restless, inscrutable eyes. At last he came near the Princess, once a bitter enemy, but now captivated and captured by his powers of polite irony. "What are you thinking of?" she asked. "I am not thinking at all," he replied; "I am enjoying myself." [1] After that one can understand why Jew-baiting became a favourite sport in Russia throughout the next two decades.

We turn now to note the terms of the Treaty of Berlin (July 13, 1878).[2] The importance of this compact will be seen if its provisions are compared with those of the Treaty of San Stefano, which it replaced. Instead of the greater Bulgaria, subjected for two years to Russian control, the Congress ordained that Bulgaria proper should not extend beyond the main chain of the Balkans, thus reducing its extent from 163,000 square kilometres to 64,000, and its population from four millions to a million and a half. The period of military occupation and supervision of the new administration by Russia was reduced to nine months. At the end of that time, and on the completion of the "organic law," a Prince was to be elected "freely" by the

[1] Princess Radziwill, *My Recollections*, p. 149.

[2] For the Protocols, see Parl. Papers, Turkey (1878), No. 39. For the Treaty, see *ibid.*, No. 44; also *The European Concert on the Eastern Question*, by T. E. Holland, pp. 277–307.

population of the principality. The new State remained under the suzerainty of Turkey, the Sultan confirming the election of the new Prince of Bulgaria, "with the assent of the Powers."

Another important departure from the San Stefano terms was the creation of the province of Eastern Roumelia, with boundaries shown in the accompanying map. While having a Christian governor, and enjoying the rights of local self-government, it was to remain under "the direct political and military authority of the Sultan, under conditions of administrative autonomy." The Sultan retained the right of keeping garrisons there, though a local militia was to preserve internal order. As will be shown in the next chapter, this anomalous state of things passed away in 1885, when the province threw off Turkish control and joined Bulgaria.

The other Christian States of the Balkans underwent changes of the highest importance. Montenegro lost half of her expected gains, but secured access to the sea at Antivari. The acquisitions of Servia were now effected at the expense of Bulgaria. These decisions were greatly in favour of Austria. To that Power the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was now entrusted for an indefinite period in the interest of the peace of Europe, and she proceeded forthwith to drive a wedge between the Serbs of Servia and Montenegro. It is needless to say that, in spite of the armed opposition of the Mohammedan people of those provinces—which led to severe fighting in July to September of that year—Austria's occupation has been permanent, though nominally they still form part of the Turkish Empire.

Roumania and Servia gained complete independence and

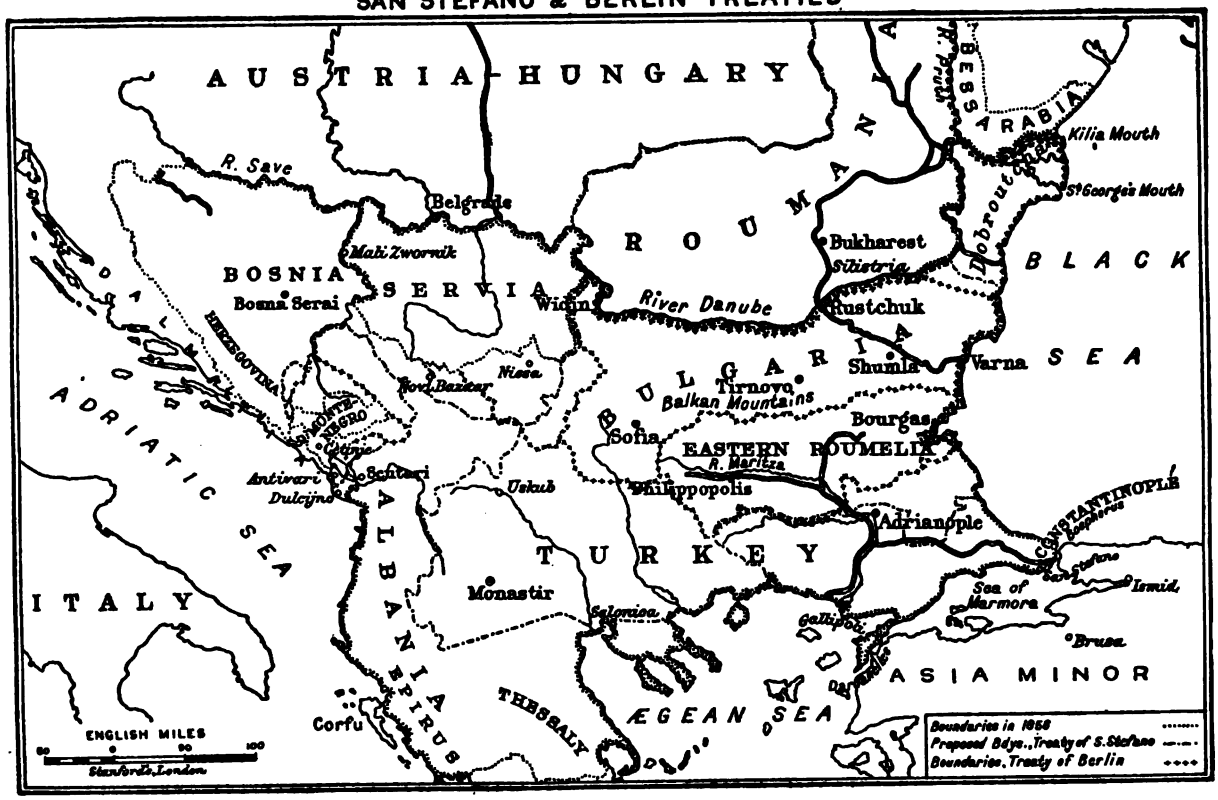
ceased to pay tribute to the Sultan, but both States complained of the lack of support accorded to them by Russia, considering the magnitude of their efforts for the Slavonic cause. Roumania certainly fared very badly at the hands of the Power for which it had done yeoman service in the war. The pride of the Roumanian people brooked no thought of accepting the Dobrudscha, a district in great part marshy and thinly populated, as an exchange for a fertile district peopled by their kith and kin. They let the world know that Russia appropriated their Bessarabian district by force, and that they accepted the Dobrudscha as a war indemnity. By dint of pressure exerted at the Congress their envoys secured a southern extension of its borders at the expense of Bulgaria, a proceeding which aroused the resentment of Russia.

The conduct of the Czar's Government in this whole matter was most impolitic. It embittered the relations between the two States and drove the Government of Prince Charles to rely on Austria and the Triple Alliance. That is to say, Russia herself closed the door which had been so readily opened for her into the heart of the Sultan's dominions in 1828, 1854, and 1877.[1] We may here remark that, on the motion of the French plenipotentiaries at the Congress, that body insisted that Jews must be admitted to the franchise in Roumania. This behest of the Powers aroused violent opposition in that State, but was finally, though by no means fully, carried out.

Another Christian State of the peninsula received scant

[1] Frederick, Crown Prince of Germany, expressed the general opinion in a letter written to Prince Charles after the Berlin Congress: "Russia's conduct, after the manful service you did for that colossal Empire, meets with censure on all sides" (*Reminiscences of the King of Roumania*, p. 325).

SAN STEFANO & BERLIN TREATIES



consideration at the Congress. Greece, as we have seen, had recalled her troops from Thessaly on the understanding that her claims should be duly considered at the general peace. She now pressed those claims; but, apart from initial encouragement given by Lord Salisbury, she received little or no support. On the motion of the French plenipotentiary, M. Waddington, her desire to control the northern shores of the Ægean and the island of Crete was speedily set aside; but he sought to win for her practically the whole of Thessaly and Epirus. This, however, was firmly opposed by Lord Beaconsfield, who objected to the cession to her of the southern and purely Greek districts of Thessaly and Epirus. He protested against the notion that the plenipotentiaries had come to Berlin in order to partition "a worn-out State" (Turkey). They were there to "strengthen an ancient Empire—essential to the maintenance of peace."

"As for Greece," he said, "States, like individuals, which have a future are in a position to be able to wait." True, he ended by expressing "the hope and even the conviction" that the Sultan would accept an equitable solution of the question of the Thessalian frontier; but the Congress acted on the other sage dictum and proceeded to subject the Hellenes to the educative influences of hope deferred. Protocol 13 had recorded the opinion of the Powers that the northern frontier of Greece should follow the courses of the rivers Salammaria and Kalamas; but they finally decided to offer their mediation to the disputants only in case no agreement could be framed. The Sublime Porte, as we shall see, improved on the procrastinating methods of the Nestors of European diplomacy.[1]

[1] See Mr. L. Sergeant's *Greece in the Nineteenth Century* (1897),

As regards matters that directly concerned Turkey and Russia, we may note that the latter finally agreed to forego the acquisition of the Bayazid district and the lands adjoining the caravan route from the Shah's dominions to Erzeroum. The Czar's Government also promised that Batoum should be a free port, and left unchanged the regulations respecting the navigation of the Dardanelles and Bosporus. By a subsequent treaty with Turkey of February, 1879, the Porte agreed to pay to Russia a war indemnity of about £32,000,000.

More important from our standpoint are the clauses relating to the good government of the Christians of Turkey. By Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin the Porte bound itself to carry out "the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Circassians and Kurds." It even added the promise "periodically" to "make known the steps taken to this effect to the Powers who will superintend their application." In the next article Turkey promised to "maintain" the principle of religious liberty and to give it the widest application. Differences of religion were to be no bar to employment in any public capacity, and all persons were to "be admitted, without distinction of religion, to give evidence before the tribunals."

Such was the Treaty of Berlin (July 13, 1878). Viewed in its broad outlines, it aimed at piecing together again the Turkish districts which had been severed at San Stefano; the Bulgars and Serbs who there gained the hope of

chap. xii., for the speeches of the Greek envoys at the Congress; also that of Sir Charles Dilke in the House of Commons in the debate of July 29–August 2, 1878, as to England's desertion of the Greek cause after the ninth session (June 29th) of the Berlin Congress.

effecting a real union of those races were now sundered once more, the former in three divisions, while the Serbs of Servia, Bosnia, and Montenegro were wedged apart by the intrusion of the Hapsburg Power. Yet, imperfect though it was in several points, that treaty promised substantial gains for the Christians of Turkey. The collapse of the Sultan's power had been so complete, so notorious, that few persons believed he would ever dare to disregard the mandate of the Great Powers and his own solemn promises stated above. But no one could then foresee the exhibition of weakness and cynicism in the policy of those Powers toward Turkey, which disgraced the polity of Europe in the last decades of the century. The causes that brought about that state of mental torpor in the face of hideous massacres, and of moral weakness displayed by sovereigns and statesmen in the midst of their millions of armed men, will be to some extent set forth in the following chapters.

As regards the welfare of the Christians in Asia Minor, the Treaty of Berlin assigned equal responsibilities to all the signatory Powers. But the British Government had already laid itself under a special charge on their behalf by the terms of the Cyprus Convention quoted above. Five days before that treaty was signed the world heard with a gasp of surprise that England had become practically mistress of Cyprus and assumed some measure of responsibility for the good government of the Christians of Asiatic Turkey. No limit of time was assigned for the duration of the Convention, and apparently it still holds good so far as relates to the material advantages accruing from the possession of that island.

It is needless to say that the Cypriotes have benefited

greatly by the British administration; the value of the imports and exports nearly doubled between 1878 and 1888. But this fact does not and cannot dispose of the larger questions opened up as to the methods of acquisition and of the moral responsibilities which it entailed. These at once aroused sharp differences of opinion. Admiration at the skill and daring which had gained for Britain a point of vantage in the Levant and set back Russia's prestige in that quarter was chequered by protests against the methods of secrecy, sensationalism, and self-seeking that latterly had characterised British diplomacy.

One more surprise was still forthcoming. Lord Derby, speaking in the House of Lords on July 18th, gave point to these protests by divulging a State secret of no small importance, namely, that one of the causes of his retirement at the end of March was a secret proposal of the Ministry to send an expedition from India to seize Cyprus and one of the Syrian ports with a view to operations against Russia, and that, too, with *or without* the consent of the Sultan. Whether the Cabinet arrived at anything like a decision in this question is very doubtful. Lord Salisbury stoutly denied the correctness of his predecessor's statement. The papers of Sir Stafford Northcote also show that the scheme at that time came up for discussion, but was "laid aside." [1] Lord Derby, however, stated that he had kept private notes of the discussion; and it is improbable that he would have resigned on a question that was merely mooted and then entirely dismissed. The mystery in which the deliberations of the Cabinet are involved, and very rightly involved, broods over this as over so many topics in which Lord Beaconsfield was concerned.

[1] *Sir Stafford Northcote*, ii., p. 108.

On another and far weightier point no difference of opinion is possible. Viewed by the light of the Cyprus Convention, Britain's responsibility for assuring a minimum of good government for the Christians of Asiatic Turkey is undeniable. Unfortunately it admits of no denial that the duties which that responsibility involves have not been discharged. The story of the misgovernment and massacre of the Armenian Christians is one that will ever redound to the disgrace of all the signatories of the Treaty of Berlin; it is doubly disgraceful to the Power which framed the Cyprus Convention.

A praiseworthy effort was made by the Beaconsfield Government to strengthen British influence and the cause of reform by sending a considerable number of well-educated men as consuls to Asia Minor, under the supervision of the Consul-general, Sir Charles Wilson. In the first two years they effected much good, securing the dismissal of several of the worst Turkish officials, and implanting hope in the oppressed Greeks and Armenians. Had they been well supported from London, they might have wrought a permanent change. Such, at least, is the belief of Professor Ramsay after several years' experience in Asia Minor.

Unfortunately, the Gladstone Government, which came into power in the spring of 1880, desired to limit its responsibilities on all sides, especially in the Levant. The British Consuls ceased to be supported, and after the arrival of Mr. (now Lord) Goschen at Constantinople in May, 1880, as Ambassador Extraordinary, British influence began to suffer a decline everywhere through Turkey, partly owing to the events soon to be described. The outbreak of war in Egypt in 1882 was made a pretext by the

British Government for the transference of the Consuls to Egypt; and thereafter matters in Asia Minor slid back into the old ruts. The progress of the Greeks and Armenians, the traders of that land, suffered a check, and the remarkable Moslem revival which the Sultan inaugurated in that year (the year 1300 of the Mohammedan calendar) gradually led up to the troubles and massacres which culminated in the years 1896 and 1897. We may finally note that when the Gladstone Ministry left the field open in Asia Minor, the German Government promptly took possession; and since 1883 the influence of Berlin has more and more penetrated into the Sultan's lands in Europe and Asia.[1]

The collapse of British influence at Constantinople was hastened on by the efforts made by the Cabinet of London, after Mr. Gladstone's accession to office, on behalf of Greece. It soon appeared that Abdul Hamid and his Ministers would pay no heed to the recommendations of the Great Powers on this head, for on July 20, 1878, they informed Sir Henry Layard of their "final" decision that no Thessalian districts would be given up to Greece. Owing to pressure exerted by the Dufaure-Waddington Ministry in France, the Powers decided that a European Commission should be appointed to consider the whole question. To this the Beaconsfield Government gave a not very willing assent.

The Porte bettered the example. It took care to name as the first place of meeting of the Commissioners a village to the north of the Gulf or Arta which was not discoverable on any map. When at last this mistake was rectified, and

[1] See *Impressions of Turkey*, by Prof. W. M. Ramsay (1897), chap. vi.

the Greek envoys on two occasions sought to steam into the gulf, they were fired on from the Turkish forts. After these amenities, the Commission finally met at Prevesa, only to have its report shelved by the Porte (January–March, 1879). Next, in answer to a French demand for European intervention, the Turks opposed various devices taken from the inexhaustible stock of Oriental subterfuges. So the time wore on until, in the spring of 1880, the fall of the Beaconsfield Ministry brought about a new political situation.

The new Prime Minister, Mr. Gladstone, was known as the statesman who had given the Ionian Isles to Greece, and who advocated the expulsion of the Turks, "bag and baggage," from Europe. At once the despatches from Downing Street took on a different complexion, and the substitution of Mr. Goschen for Sir Henry Layard at Constantinople enabled the Porte to hear the voice of the British people, undimmed by official checks. A Conference of the Powers met at Berlin to discuss the carrying out of their recommendations on the Greek Question, and of the terms of the late treaty respecting Montenegro.

On this latter affair the Powers finally found it needful to make a joint naval demonstration against the troops of the Albanian League who sought to prevent the handing over of the seaport of Dulcigno to Montenegro, as prescribed by the Treaty of Berlin. But, as happened during the Concert of the Powers in the spring of 1876, a single discordant note sufficed to impair the effect of the collective voice. Then it was England which refused to employ any coercive measures; now it was Austria and Germany, and finally (after the resignation of the Waddington Ministry) France. When the Sultan heard of this discord in the European

Concert, his Moslem scruples resumed their wonted sway, and the Albanians persisted in defying Europe.

The warships of the Powers might have continued to threaten the Albanian coast with unshotted cannon to this day, had not the Gladstone Cabinet proposed drastic means for bringing the Sultan to reason. The plan was that the united fleet should steam straightway to Smyrna and land marines for the sequestration of the customs dues of that important trading centre. Here again the Powers were not of one mind. The three dissentients again hung back; but they so far concealed their refusal, or reluctance, as to leave on Abdul Hamid's mind the impression that a united Christendom was about to seize Smyrna.[1] This was enough. He could now (October 10, 1880) bow his head resignedly before superior force without sinning against the Moslem's unwritten but inviolable creed of never giving way before Christians save under absolute necessity. At once he ordered his troops to carry out the behests of the Powers; and after some fighting, Dervish Pasha drove the Albanians out of Dulcigno, and surrendered it to the Montenegrins (November–December, 1880). Such is the official account; but, seeing that the Porte knows how to turn to account the fanaticism and turbulence of the Albanians,[2] it may be that their resistance all along was but a device of that resourceful Government to thwart the will of Europe.

The same threat as to the seizure of the Turkish customs-house at Smyrna sufficed to help on the solution of the Greek Question. The delays and insults of the Turks had driven the Greeks to desperation, and only the urgent

[1] *Life of Gladstone*, by J. Morley, iii., p. 9.
[2] See *Turkey in Europe*, by "Odysseus," p. 434.

remonstrances of the Powers availed to hold back the Cabinet of Athens from a declaration of war. This danger by degrees passed away; but, as usually happens where passions are excited on both sides, every compromise pressed on the litigants by the arbiters presented great difficulty. The Congress of Berlin had recommended the extension of Greek rule over the purely Hellenic districts of Thessaly, assigning as the new boundaries the course of the rivers Salammaria and Kalamas, the latter of which flows into the sea opposite the Island of Corfu.

Another Conference of the Powers (it was the third) met to decide the details of that proposal; but owing to the change of government in France, along with other causes, the whole question proved to be very intricate. In the end, the Powers induced the Sultan to sign the Convention of May 24, 1881, whereby the course of the river Arta was substituted for that of the Kalamas.

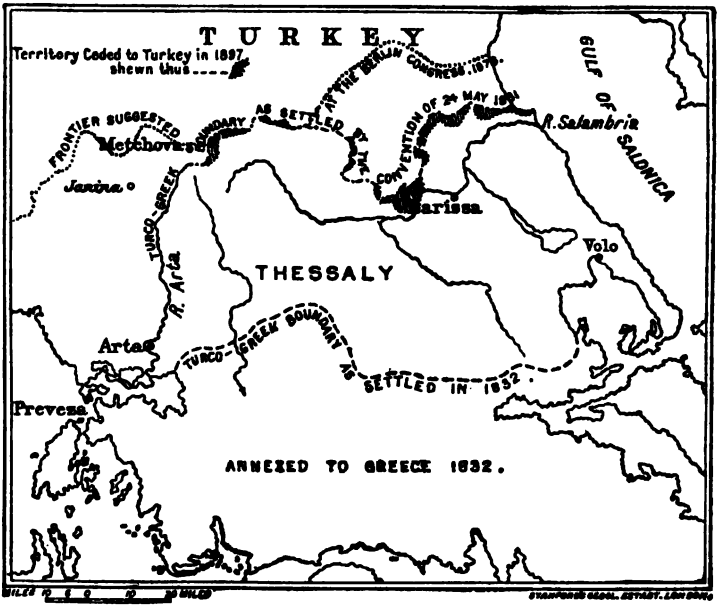
As a set-off to this proposal, which involved the loss of Jannina and Prevesa for Greece, they awarded to the Hellenes some districts north of the Salammaria which helped partially to screen the town of Larissa from the danger of Turkish inroads.[1] To this arrangement Moslems and Christians sullenly assented. On the whole the Greeks gained 13,200 square kilometres in territory and about 150,000 inhabitants, but their failure to gain several Hellenic districts of Epirus rankled deep in the popular consciousness and prepared the way for the events of 1885 and 1897.

These later developments can receive here only the briefest reference. In the former year, when the two

[1] *The European Concert in the Eastern Question*, by T. E. Holland, pp. 60–69.

Bulgarias framed their union, the Greeks threatened Turkey with war, but were speedily brought to another frame of mind by a "pacific" blockade by the Powers. Embittered by this treatment, the Hellenes sought to push on their cause in Macedonia and Crete through a powerful Society, the "Ethnike Hetairia." The chronic discontent of the Cretans at Turkish misrule and the outrages of the Moslem troops led to grave complications in 1897. At the beginning of that year the Powers intervened with a proposal for the appointment of a foreign gendarmerie (January, 1897). In order to defeat this plan the Sultan stirred up Moslem fanaticism in the island, until the resulting atrocities brought Greece into the field both in Thessaly and Crete. During the ensuing strifes in Crete the Powers demeaned themselves by siding against the Christian insurgents and some Greek troops sent from Athens to their aid. Few events in our age have caused a more painful sensation than the bombardment of Cretan villages by British and French warships. The Powers also proclaimed a "pacific" blockade of Crete (March–May, 1897). The inner reasons that prompted these actions are not fully known. It may safely be said that they will need far fuller justification than that which was given in the explanation of Ministers at Westminster.

Meanwhile the passionate resentment felt by the Greeks had dragged the Government of King George into war with Turkey (April 18, 1897). The little kingdom was speedily overpowered by Turks and Albanians; and despite the recall of their troops from Crete, the Hellenes were unable to hold Phersala and other positions in the middle of Thessaly. The Powers, however, intervened on May 12 and proceeded to pare down the exorbitant terms of the



MAP OF THESSALY

Porte, allowing it to gain only small strips in the north of Thessaly, as a "strategic rectification" of the frontier. The Turkish demand of £T10,000,000 was reduced to £T4,000,000 (September 18).

This successful war against Greece raised the prestige of Turkey and added fuel to the flames of Mohammedan bigotry. These, as we have seen, had been assiduously fanned by Abdul Hamid II. ever since the year 1882, when a Pan-Islam movement began. The results of this revival were far-reaching, being felt even among the hill tribes on the Afghan-Punjab border (see Chapter XIV.). Throughout the Ottoman Empire the Mohammedans began to assert their superiority over Christians; and, as Professor Ramsay has observed, "the means whereby Turkish power is restored is always the same—massacre." [1]

It would be premature to inquire which of the European Powers must be held chiefly responsible for the toleration of the hideous massacres of the Armenians in 1896–97, and the atrocious misgovernment of Macedonia, by the Turks. All the Great Powers who signed the Berlin Treaty are guilty; and, as has been stated above, the State which framed the Cyprus Convention is doubly guilty, so far as concerns the events in Armenia. A grave share of responsibility also rests with those who succeeded in handing back a large part of Macedonia to the Turks. But the writer who in the future undertakes to tell the story of the decline of European morality at the close of the nineteenth century, and the growth of cynicism and selfishness, will probably pass still severer censures on the Emperors of Germany and Russia, who, with the unequalled influence which they wielded over the Porte, might have intervened

[1] *Impressions of Turkey*, by W. M. Ramsay, p. 139.

with effect to screen their co-religionists from unutterable wrongs, and yet, as far as is known, raised not a finger on their behalf. The Treaty of Berlin, which might have inaugurated an era of good government throughout the whole of Turkey if the Powers had been true to their trust, will be cited as damning evidence in the account of the greatest betrayal of a trust which Modern History records.

NOTE.—(Added to page as revised for volume, July, 1905.) For the efforts made by the British Government on behalf of the Armenians, the reader should consult the last chapter of Mr. James Bryce's book, *Transcaucasia and Mount Ararat* (new edition, 1896). Further information may be expected in the *Life of Earl Granville*, soon to appear from the pen of Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice.

CHAPTER X

THE MAKING OF BULGARIA

"If you can help to build up these peoples into a bulwark of independent States and thus screen the 'sick man' from the fury of the northern blast, for God's sake do it."—SIR R. MORIER to SIR W. WHITE, *December* 27, 1885.

THE failure which attended the forward Hellenic movement during the years 1896–97 stands in sharp relief with the fortunes of the Bulgarians. To the rise of this youngest, and not the least promising, of European States, we must devote a whole chapter; for during a decade the future of the Balkan Peninsula and the policy of the great Powers turned very largely on the emancipation of this interesting race from the effective control of the Sultan and the Czar.

The rise of this enigmatical people affords a striking example of the power of national feeling to uplift the downtrodden. Until the year 1876, the very name Bulgarian was scarcely known except as a geographical term. Kinglake, in his charming work, *Eothen*, does not mention the Bulgarians, though he travelled on horseback from Belgrade to Sophia and thence to Adrianople. And yet in 1828, the conquering march of the Russians to Adrianople had awakened that people to a passing thrill of national consciousness. Other travellers, for instance Cyprien Robert in the "thirties," noted their sturdy patience in

toil, their slowness to act, but their great perseverance and will-power, when the resolve was formed.

These qualities may perhaps be ascribed to their Tatar (Tartar) origin. Ethnically, they are closely akin to the Magyars and Turks, but, having been long settled on the banks of the Volga (hence their name, Bulgarian = Volgarian), they adopted the speech and religion of the Slavs. They have lived this new life for about a thousand years,[1] and in this time have been completely changed. Though their flat lips and noses bespeak an Asiatic origin, they are practically Slavs, save that their temperament is less nervous, and their persistence greater than that of their co-religionists.[2] Their determined adhesion to Slav ideals and rejection of Turkish ways should serve as a reminder to anthropologists that peoples are not mainly to be judged and divided off by craniological peculiarities. Measurement of skulls may tell us something concerning the basal characteristics of tribes; it leaves untouched the boundless fund of beliefs, thoughts, aspirations, and customs which mould the lives of nations. The peoples of to-day are what their creeds, customs, and hopes have made them; as regards their political life, they have little more likeness to their tribal forefathers than the average man has to the chimpanzee.

The first outstanding event in the recent rise of the Bulgarian race was the acquisition of spiritual independence in 1869–70. Hitherto they, in common with nearly all the Slavs, had belonged to the Greek Church, and had recognised the supremacy of its Patriarch at Constantinople,

[1] *The Peasant State: Bulgaria in 1894*, by E. Dicey, C.B. (1904), p. 11.

[2] *Turkey in Europe*, by "Odysseus," pp. 28, 356, 367.

but, as the national idea progressed, the Bulgarians sought to have their own Church. It was in vain that the Greeks protested against this schismatic attempt. The Western Powers and Russia favoured it; the Porte also was not loth to see the Christians further divided. Early in the year 1870, the Bulgarian Church came into existence, with an Exarch of its own at Constantinople who has survived the numerous attempts of the Greeks to ban him as a schismatic from the "Universal Church." The Bulgarians therefore took rank with the other peoples of the Peninsula as a religious entity, the Roumanian and Servian Churches having been constituted early in the century. In fact, the Porte recognises the Bulgarians, even in Macedonia, as an independent religious community, a right which it does not accord to the Servians; the latter, in Macedonia, are counted only as "Greeks." [1]

The Treaty of San Stefano promised to make the Bulgarians the predominant race of the Balkan Peninsula for the benefit of Russia; but, as we have seen, the efforts of Great Britain and Austria, backed by the jealousies of Greeks and Servians, led to a radical change in those arrangements. The Treaty of Berlin divided that people into three unequal parts. The larger mass, dwelling in Bulgaria Proper, gained entire independence of the Sultan, save in the matter of suzerainty; the Bulgarians on the southern slopes of the Balkans acquired autonomy only in local affairs, and remained under the control of the Porte in military affairs and in matters of high policy; while the Bulgarians who dwelt in Macedonia, about 1,120,000 in number, were led to hope something from articles 61 and

[1] *Turkey in Europe*, by "Odysseus," pp. 280–283, 297; *The Peasant State*, by E. Dicey, pp. 75–77.

62 of the Treaty of Berlin, but remained otherwise at the mercy of the Sultan.[1]

This unsatisfactory state of things promised to range the Principality of Bulgaria entirely on the side of Russia, and at the outset the hope of all Bulgarians was for a closed friendship with the great Power that had effected their liberation. These sentiments, however, speedily cooled. The officers appointed by the Czar to organise the Principality carried out their task in a high-handed way that soon irritated the newly enfranchised people. Gratitude is a feeling that soon vanishes, especially in political life. There, far more than in private life, it is a great mistake for the party that has conferred a boon to remind the recipient of what he owes, especially if that recipient be young and aspiring. Yet that was the mistake committed everywhere throughout Bulgaria. The army, the public service, everything, was modelled on Russian lines during the time of the occupation, until the overbearing ways of the officials succeeded in dulling the memory of the services rendered in the war. The fact of the liberation was forgotten amidst the irritation aroused by the constant reminders of it.

The Russians succeeded in alienating even the young German prince who came, with the full favour of the Czar Alexander II., to take up the reins of government. A scion of the House of Hesse Darmstadt by a morganatic marriage, Prince Alexander of Battenberg had been sounded by the Russian authorities, with a view to his acceptance of the Bulgarian crown. By the vote of the Bulgarian Chamber, it was offered to him on April 29

[1] Réclus, Kiepert, Ritter, and other geographers and ethnologists, admit that the majority in Macedonia is Bulgarian.

1879. He accepted it, knowing full well that it would be a thorny honour for a youth of twenty-two years of age. His tall commanding frame, handsome features, ability and prowess as a soldier, and, above all, his winsome address, seemed to mark him out as a natural leader of men; and he received a warm welcome from the Bulgarians in the month of July.

His difficulties began at once. The chief Russian administrator, Dondukoff Korsakoff, had thrust his countrymen into all the important and lucrative posts, thereby leaving out in the cold the many Bulgarians, who, after working hard for the liberation of their land, now saw it transferred from the slovenly overlordship of the Turk to the masterful grip of the Muscovite. The Principality heaved with discontent, and these feelings finally communicated themselves to the sympathetic nature of the Prince. But duty and policy alike forbade him casting off the Russian influence. No position could be more trying for a young man of chivalrous and ambitious nature, endowed with a strain of sensitiveness which he probably derived from his Polish mother. He early set forth his feelings in a private letter to Prince Charles of Roumania:

"Devoted with my whole heart to the Czar Alexander, I am anxious to do nothing that can be called anti-Russian. Unfortunately the Russian officials have acted with the utmost want of tact; confusion prevails in every office, and peculation, thanks to Dondukoff's decrees, is all but sanctioned. I am daily confronted with the painful alternative of having to decide either to assent to the Russian demands or to be accused in Russia of ingratitude and of 'injuring the most sacred feelings of the Bulgarians.' My position is truly terrible."

The friction with Russia increased with time. Early in the year 1880, Prince Alexander determined to go to St. Petersburg to appeal to the Czar in the hope of allaying the violence of the Panslavonic intriguers. Matters improved for a time, but only because the Prince accepted the guidance of the Czar. Thereafter he retained most of his pro-Russian Ministers, even though the second Legislative Assembly, elected in the spring of that year, was strongly Liberal and anti-Russian. In April, 1881, he acted on the advice of one of his Ministers, a Russian General named Ehrenroth, and carried matters with a high hand: he dissolved the Assembly, suspended the constitution, encouraged his officials to browbeat the voters, and thereby gained a docile Chamber, which carried out his behests by decreeing a Septennate, or autocratic rule for seven years. In order to prop up his miniature czardom, he now asked the new Emperor, Alexander III., to send him two Russian Generals. His request was granted in the persons of Generals Soboleff and Kaulbars, who became Ministers of the Interior and for War, a third, General Tioharoff, being also added as Minister of Justice.

The triumph of Muscovite influence now seemed to be complete, until the trio just named usurped the functions of the Bulgarian Ministers and informed the Prince that they took their orders from the Czar, not from him. Chafing at these self-imposed Russian bonds, the Prince now leant more on the moderate Liberals, headed by Karaveloff; and on the Muscovites intriguing in the same quarter, and with the troops, with a view to his deposition, they met with a complete repulse. An able and vigorous young Bulgarian, Stambuloff, was now fast rising in importance among the more resolute nationalists. The son of an

innkeeper of Tirnova, he was sent away to be educated at Odessa; there he early became imbued with Nihilist ideas, and on returning to the Danubian lands, framed many plots for the expulsion of the Turks from Bulgaria. His thick-set frame, his force of will, his eloquence, passionate speech, and, above all, his burning patriotism, soon brought him to the front as the leader of the national party; and he now strove with all his might to prevent his land falling to the position of a mere satrapy of the liberators. Better the puny autocracy of Prince Alexander than the very real despotism of the nominees of the Emperor Alexander III.

The character of the new Czar will engage our attention in the following chapter; here we need only say that the more his narrow, hard, and overbearing nature asserted itself, the greater appeared the danger to the liberties of the Principality. At last, when the situation became unbearable, the Prince resolved to restore the Bulgarian constitution; and he took this momentous step, on September 18, 1883, without consulting the three Russian Ministers, who thereupon resigned.[1]

At once the Prince summoned Karaveloff, and said to him: "My dear Karaveloff, for the second time I swear to thee that I will be entirely submissive to the will of the people, and that I will govern in full accordance with the constitution of Tirnova. Let us forget what passed during

[1] For the scenes which then occurred, see *Le Prince Alexandre de Battenberg en Bulgarie*, by A. G. Drandar, pp. 169 *et seq.*; also A. Koch, *Fürst Alexander von Bulgarien*, pp. 144–147.

For the secret aims of Russia, see *Documens secrets de la Politique russe en Orient*, by R. Leonoff (Berlin, 1893), pp. 49–65. General Soboleff, *Der erste Fürst von Bulgarien* (Leipzig, 1896), has given a highly coloured Russian account of all these incidents.

the *coup d'état* [of 1881], and work together for the prosperity of the country." He embraced him; and that embrace was the pledge of a close union of hearts between him and his people.[1]

The Czar forthwith showed his anger at this act of independence, and, counting it a sign of defiance, allowed or encouraged his agents in Bulgaria to undermine the power of the Prince, and procure his deposition. For two years they struggled in vain. An attempt by the Russian Generals Soboleff and Kaulbars to kidnap the Prince by night failed, owing to the loyalty of Lieutenant Martinoff, then on duty at his palace; the two ministerial plotters forthwith left Bulgaria.[2]

Even now the scales did not fall from the eyes of the Emperor Alexander III. Bismarck was once questioned by the faithful Busch as to the character of that potentate. The German Boswell remarked that he had heard Alexander III. described as "stupid, exceedingly stupid"; whereupon the Chancellor replied: "In a general way that is saying too much."[3] Leaving to posterity the task of deciding that question, we may here point out that Muscovite policy in the years 1878–85 achieved a truly remarkable feat in uniting all the liberated races of the Balkan Peninsula against their liberators. By the terms of the Treaty of San Stefano, Russia had alienated the Roumanians, Servians, and Greeks; so that when the

[1] See Laveleye's *The Balkan Peninsula*, pp. 259–262, for an account of Karaveloff.

[2] J. G. C. Minchin, *The Growth of Freedom in the Balkan Peninsula* (1886), p. 237. The author, Consul-General for Servia in London, had earlier contributed many articles to the *Times* and *Morning Advertiser* on Balkan affairs.

[3] *Bismarck: Some Secret Pages of his History*, by Dr. M. Busch (Note of January 5, 1886), iii., p. 150 (English edition).

Princes of those two Slav Principalities decided to take the kingly title (as they did in the spring of 1881 and 1882 respectively), it was after visits to Berlin and Vienna, whereby they tacitly signified their friendliness to the Central Powers.

In the case of Servia this went to the length of alliance. On June 25, 1881, the Foreign Minister, M. Mijatovich, concluded with Austria-Hungary a secret convention, whereby Servia agreed to discourage any movement among the Slavs of Bosnia, while the Dual Monarchy promised to refrain from any action detrimental to Servian hopes for what is known as Old Servia. The agreement was for eight years; but it was not renewed in 1889.[1] The fact, however, that such a compact could be framed within three years of the Berlin Congress, shows how keen was the resentment of the Servian Government at the neglect of its interests by Russia, both there and at San Stefano.

The gulf between Bulgaria and Russia widened more slowly, but with the striking sequel that will be seen. The Dondukoffs, Soboleffs, and Kaulbars first awakened and then estranged the formerly passive and docile race for whose aggrandisement Russia had incurred the resentment of the neighbouring peoples. Under Muscovite tutelage the "ignorant Bulgarian peasants" were developing a strong civic and political instinct. Further, the Czar's attacks, now on the Prince, and then on the popular party, served to bind these formerly discordant elements into an alliance. Stambuloff, the very embodiment of young Bulgaria in tenacity of purpose and love of freedom,

[1] The treaty has not been published; for this general description of it I am indebted to the kindness of M. Mijatovich himself.

was now the President of the Sobranje, or National Assembly, and he warmly supported Prince Alexander so long as he withstood Russian pretensions. At the outset the strifes at Sophia had resembled a triangular duel, and the Russian agents could readily have disposed of the third combatant had they sided either with the Prince or with the liberals. By browbeating both they simplified the situation to the benefit both of the Prince and of the nascent liberties of Bulgaria.

Alexander III. and his Chancellor, de Giers, had also tied their hands in Balkan affairs by a treaty which they framed with Austria and Germany, and signed and ratified at the meeting of the three Emperors at Skiernewice (September, 1884—see Chapter XII.). The most important of its provisions from our present standpoint was that by which, in the event of two of the three Empires disagreeing on Balkan questions, the casting vote rested with the third Power. This gave to Bismarck the same rôle of arbiter which he had played at the Berlin Congress.

But in the years 1885 and 1886, the Czar and his agents committed a series of blunders, by the side of which their earlier actions seemed statesmanlike. The welfare of the Bulgarian people demanded an early reversal of the policy decided on at the Congress of Berlin (1878), whereby the southern Bulgarians were divided from their northern brethren in order that the Sultan might have the right to hold the Balkan passes in time of war. That is to say, the Powers, especially Great Britain and Austria, set aside the claims of a strong racial instinct for purely military reasons. The breakdown of this artificial arrangement was confidently predicted at the time; and Russian agents at first took the lead in preparing for the future union. Skobeleff,

Katkoff, and the Panslavonic societies of Russia encouraged the formation of "gymnastic societies" in Eastern Roumelia, and the youth of that province enrolled themselves with such ardour that by the year 1885 more than 40,000 were trained to the use of arms. As for the protests of the Sultan and those of his delegates at Philippopolis, they were stilled by hints from St. Petersburg, or by demands for the prompt payment of Turkey's war debt to Russia. All the world knew that, thanks to Russian patronage, Eastern Roumelia had slipped entirely from the control of Abdul Hamid.

By the summer of 1885, the unionist movement had acquired great strength. But now, at the critical time, when Russia should have led that movement, she let it drift, or even, we may say, cast off the tow-rope. Probably the Czar and his Ministers looked on the Bulgarians as too weak or too stupid to act for themselves. It was a complete miscalculation; for now Stambuloff and Karaveloff had made that aim their own, and brought to its accomplishment all the skill and zeal which they had learned in a long career of resistance to Turkish and Russian masters. There is reason to think that they and their coadjutors at Philippopolis pressed on events in the month of September, 1885, because the Czar was then known to disapprove any immediate action.

In order to understand the reason for this strange reversal of Russia's policy, we must scrutinise events more closely. The secret workings of that policy have been laid bare in a series of State documents, the genuineness of which is not altogether established. They are said to have been betrayed to the Bulgarian patriots by a Russian agent, and they certainly bear signs of authen-

ticity. If we accept them (and up to the present they have been accepted by well-informed men) the truth is as follows:

Russia would have worked hard for the union of Eastern Roumelia to Bulgaria, provided that the Prince abdicated and his people submitted completely to Russian control. Quite early in his reign Alexander III. discovered in them an independence which his masterful nature ill brooked. He therefore postponed that scheme until the Prince should abdicate or be driven out. As one of the Muscovite agents phrased it in the spring of 1881, the union must not be brought about until a Russian protectorate should be founded in the Principality; for if they made Bulgaria too strong, it would become "a second Roumania," that is, as "ungrateful" to Russia as Roumania had shown herself after the seizure of her Bessarabian lands. In fact, the Bulgarians could gain the wish of their hearts only on one condition, that of proclaiming the Emperor Alexander Grand Duke of the greater State of the future.[1]

The chief obstacles in the way of Russia's aggrandisement were the susceptibilities of "the Battenberger," as her agents impertinently named him, and the will of Stambuloff. When the Czar, by his malevolent obstinacy, finally brought these two men to accord, it was deemed needful to adopt various devices in order to shatter the forces which Russian diplomacy had succeeded in piling

[1] *Documents secrets de la Politique russe en Orient*, ed. by R. Leonoff (Berlin, 1893), pp. 8, 48. This work is named by M. Malet in his *Bibliographie* on the Eastern Question on p. 446, vol. ix., of the *Histoire Générale* of MM. Lavisse and Rambaud. I have been assured of its genuineness by a gentleman well versed in the politics of the Balkan States.

up in its own path. But here again we are reminded of the Horatian precept—

Vis consili expers mole ruit sua.

To the hectorings of Russian agents the "peasant State" offered an ever firmer resistance, and by the summer of 1885 it was clear that bribery and bullying were equally futile.

Of course the Emperor of all the Russias had it in his power to harry the Prince in many ways. Thus in the summer of 1885, when a marriage was being arranged between him and the Princess Victoria, daughter of the Crown Princess of Germany, the Czar's influence at Berlin availed to veto an engagement which is believed to have been the heartfelt wish of both the persons most nearly concerned. In this matter Bismarck, true to his policy of softening the Czar's annoyance at the Austro-German alliance by complaisance in all other matters, made himself Russia's henchman, and urged his press-trumpet, Busch, to write newspaper articles abusing Queen Victoria as having instigated this match solely with a view to the substitution of British for Russian influence in Bulgaria.[1] The more servile part of the German press improved on these suggestions, and stigmatised the Bulgarian Revolution of the ensuing autumn as an affair trumped up at London. So far is it possible for minds of a certain type to read their own pettiness into events.

[1] For Bismarck's action and that of the Emperor William I. in 1885, see *Bismarck: Some Secret Pages of his History*, by M. Busch, iii., pp. 171, 180, 292, also p. 335. Russian agents came to Stambuloff in the summer of 1885 to say that "Prince Alexander must be got rid of before he can ally himself with the German family regnant." Stambuloff informed the Prince of this. See *Stambuloff*, by A. H. Beaman, p. 52.

Meanwhile, if we may credit the despatches above referred to, the Russian Government was seeking to drag Bulgaria into fratricidal strife with Roumania over some trifling disputes about the new border near Silistria. That quarrel, if well managed, promised to be materially advantageous to Russia and mentally soothing to her ruler. It would weaken the Danubian States and help to bring them back to the heel of their former protector. Further, seeing that the behaviour of King Charles to his Russian benefactors was no less "ungrateful" than that of Prince Alexander, it would be a fit Nemesis for these *ingrats* to be set by the ears. Accordingly, in the month of August, 1885, orders were issued to Russian agents to fan the border dispute; and on August 12/30 the Director of the Asiatic Department at St. Petersburg wrote the following instructions to the Russian Consul-General at Rustchuk:

"You remember that the union [of the two Bulgarias] must not take place until after the abdication of Prince Alexander. However, the ill-advised and hostile attitude of King Charles of Roumania [to Russia] obliges the imperial government to postpone for some time the projected union of Eastern Roumelia to the Principality, as well as the abdication and expulsion of the Prince of Bulgaria. In the session of the Council of [Russian] Ministers held yesterday it was decided to beg the Emperor to call Prince Alexander to Copenhagen or to St. Petersburg in order to inform him that, according to the will of His Majesty, Bulgaria must defend by armed force her rights over the points hereinbefore mentioned." [1]

The despatch then states that Russia will keep Turkey quiet and will eventually make war on Roumania; also,

[1] R. Leonoff, *op. cit.*, pp. 81–84.

that if Bulgaria triumphs over Roumania, the latter will pay her in territory or money, or in both. Possibly, however, the whole scheme may have been devised to serve as a decoy to bring Prince Alexander within the power of his imperial patrons, who, in that case, would probably have detained and dethroned him.

Further light was thrown on the tortuous course of Russian diplomacy by a speech of Count Eugen Zichy to the Hungarian Delegations about a year later. He made the startling declaration that in the summer of 1885 Russia concluded a treaty with Montenegro with the aim of dethroning King Milan and Prince Alexander, and the division of the Balkan States between Prince Nicholas of Montenegro and the Karageorgevich Pretender who has since made his way to the throne at Belgrade. The details of these schemes are not known, but the searchlight thrown upon them from Buda-Pesth revealed the shifts of the policy of those "friends of peace," the Czar Alexander III. and his Chancellor, de Giers.

Prince Alexander may not have been aware of these schemes in their full extent, but he and his friends certainly felt the meshes closing around them. There were only two courses open, either completely to submit to the Czar (which, for the Prince, implied abdication) or to rely on the Bulgarian people. The Prince took the course which would have been taken by every man worthy of the name. It is, however, almost certain that he did not foresee the events at Philippopolis. He gave his word to a German officer, Major von Huhn, that he had not in the least degree expected the unionist movement to take so speedy and decisive a step forward as it did in the middle of September. The Prince, in fact, had been on a tour throughout Europe,

and expressed the same opinion to the Russian Chancellor, de Giers, at Franzensbad.

But by this time everything was ready at Philippopolis. As the men of Eastern Roumelia were all of one mind in this matter, it was the easiest of tasks to surprise the Sultan's representative, Gavril Pasha, to surround his office with soldiers, and to request him to leave the province (September 18). A carriage was ready to conduct him towards Sophia. In it sat a gaily dressed peasant girl holding a drawn sword. Gavril turned red with rage at this insult, but he mounted the vehicle, and was driven through the town and thence towards the Balkans.

Such was the departure of the last official of the Sultan from the land which the Turks had often drenched with blood; such was the revenge of the southern Bulgarians for the atrocities of 1876. Not a drop of blood was shed; and Major von Huhn, who soon arrived at Philippopolis, found Greeks and Turks living contentedly under the new government. The word "revolution" is in such cases a misnomer. South Bulgaria merely returned to its natural state.[1] But nothing will convince diplomatists that events can happen without the pulling of wires by themselves or their rivals. In this instance they found that Prince Alexander had made the revolution.

At first, however, the Prince doubted whether he should accept the crown of a Greater Bulgaria which the men of Philippopolis now enthusiastically offered to him. Stambuloff strongly urged him to accept, even if he thereby still further enraged the Czar: "Sire," he said, "two roads

[1] *The Struggle of the Bulgarians for National Independence*, by Major A. von Huhn, chap. ii. See, too, Parl. Papers, Turkey, No. 1 (1886), p. 83.

lie before you: the one to Philippopolis and as far beyond as God may lead; the other to Sistova and Darmstadt. I counsel you to take the crown the nation offers you." On the 20th the Prince announced his acceptance of the crown of a united Bulgaria. As he said to the British Consul at Philippopolis, he would have been a "sharper" (*filou*) not to side with his people.[1]

Few persons were prepared for the outburst of wrath of the Czar at hearing this news. Early in his reign he had concentrated into a single phrase—"silly Pole"—the spleen of an essentially narrow nature at seeing a kinsman and a dependant dare to think and act for himself.[2] But on this occasion, as we can now see, the Prince had marred Russia's plans in the most serious way. Stambuloff and he had deprived her of her unionist trump card. The Czar found his project of becoming Grand Duke of a Greater Bulgaria blocked by the action of this same hated kinsman. Is it surprising that his usual stolidity gave way to one of those fits of bull-like fury which aroused the fear of all who beheld them? Thenceforth between the Emperor Alexander and Prince Alexander the relations might be characterised by the curt phrase which Palafox hurled at the French from the weak walls of Saragossa—"War to the knife." Like Palafox, the Prince now had no hope but in the bravery of his people.

In the ciphered telegrams of September 19th and 20th, which the Director of the Asiatic Department at St. Petersburg sent to the Russian Consul-General at Rustchuk, the note of resentment and revenge was clearly

[1] *Stambuloff*, by A. H. Beaman, chap. iii.; Parl. Papers, *ibid.*, p. 81.

[2] *Bismarck: Reflections and Reminiscences*, ii., p. 116 (Eng. ed.).

sounded. The events in Eastern Roumelia had changed "all our intentions." The agent was therefore directed to summon the chief Russian officers in Bulgaria and ask them whether the "young" Bulgarian officers could really command brigades and regiments, and organise the artillery; also whether that army could alone meet the army of "a neighbouring State." The replies of the officers being decidedly in the negative, they were ordered to leave Bulgaria.[1] Nelidoff, the Russian ambassador at Constantinople, also worked furiously to spur on the Sultan to revenge the insult inflicted on him by Prince Alexander.

Sir William White believed that the *volte face* in Russian policy was due solely to Nelidoff's desire to thwart the peaceful policy of the Russian Chancellor, de Giers, who at that time chanced to be absent in Tyrol, while the Czar also was away at Copenhagen.[2] But it now appears that the Russian Foreign Office took Nelidoff's view, and bade him press Turkey to restore the "legal order" of things in Eastern Roumelia. Further, the Ministers of the Czar found that Servia, Greece, and perhaps also Roumania, intended to oppose the aggrandisement of Bulgaria; and it therefore seemed easy to chastise "the Battenberger" for his wanton disturbance of the peace of Europe.

Possibly Russia would herself have struck at Bulgaria but for the difficulties of the general situation. How great these were will be realised by a perusal of the following chapters, which deal with the spread of Nihilism in Russia, the formation of the Austro-German alliance, and the favour soon shown to it by Italy, the estrangement of

[1] R. Leonoff, *op. cit.*, Nos. 75, 77.

[2] *Sir William White: Memoirs and Correspondence*, by H. Sutherland Edwards, pp. 231–232.

England and the Porte owing to the action taken by the former in Egypt, and the sharp collision of interests between Russia and England at Panjdeh on the Afghan frontier. When it is further remembered that France fretted at the untoward results of M. Ferry's forward policy in Tonquin; that Germany was deeply engaged in colonial efforts; and that the United Kingdom was distracted by those efforts, by the failure of the expedition to Khartum, and by the Parnellite agitation in Ireland—the complexity of the European situation will be sufficiently evident. Assuredly the events of the year 1885 were among the most distracting ever recorded in the history of Europe.

This clash of interests among nations wearied by war, and alarmed at the apparition of the red spectre of revolution in their midst, told by no means unfavourably on the fortunes of the Balkan States. The dominant facts of the situation were, firstly, that Russia no longer had a free hand in the Balkan Peninsula in face of the compact between the three Emperors ratified at Skiernewice in the previous autumn (see Chapter XII.); and, secondly, that the traditional friendship between England and the Porte had been replaced by something like hostility. Seeing that the Sultan had estranged the British Government by his very suspicious action during the revolts of Arabi Pasha and of the Mahdi, even those who had loudly proclaimed the need of propping up his authority as essential to the stability of our Eastern Empire now began to revise their prejudices.

Thus, when Lord Salisbury came to office, if not precisely to power, in June, 1885, he found affairs in the East rapidly ripening for a change of British policy—a change

which is known to have corresponded with his own convictions. Finally, the marriage of Princess Beatrice to Prince Henry of Battenberg, on July 23, 1885, added that touch of personal interest which enabled Court circles to break with the traditions of the past and to face the new situation with equanimity. Accordingly the power of Britain, which in 1876–78 had been used to thwart the growth of freedom in the Balkan Peninsula, was now put forth to safeguard the union of Bulgaria. During these critical months Sir William White acted as ambassador at Constantinople, and used his great knowledge of the Balkan peoples with telling effect for this salutary purpose.

Lord Salisbury advised the Sultan not to send troops into Southern Bulgaria; and the warning chimed in with the note of timorous cunning which formed the undertone of that monarch's thought and policy. Distracted by the news of the warlike preparations of Servia and Greece Abdul Hamid looked on Russia's advice in a contrary sense as a piece of Muscovite treachery. About the same time, too, there were rumours of palace plots at Constantinople; and the capricious recluse of Yildiz finally decided to keep his best troops near at hand. It appears, then, that Nihilism in Russia and the spectre of conspiracy always haunting the brain of Abdul Hamid played their part in assuring the liberties of Bulgaria.

Meanwhile the Powers directed their ambassadors at Constantinople to hold a preliminary Conference at which Turkey would be represented. The result was a declaration expressing formal disapproval of the violation of the Treaty of Berlin, and a hope that all parties concerned would keep the peace. This mild protest very inadequately reflected the character of the discussions which

had been going on between the several Courts. Russia, it is known, wished to fasten the blame for the revolution on Prince Alexander; but all public censure was vetoed by England.

Probably her action was as effective in still weightier matters. A formal Conference of the ambassadors of the Powers met at Constantinople on November 5th; and there again Sir William White, acting on instructions from Lord Salisbury, defended the Bulgarian cause, and sought to bring about a friendly understanding between the Porte and "a people occupying so important a position in the Sultan's dominions." Lord Salisbury also warned the Turkish ambassador in London that if Turkey sought to expel Prince Alexander from Eastern Roumelia, she would "be making herself the instrument of those who desired the fall of the Ottoman Empire." [1]

This reference to the insidious means used by Russia for bringing the Turks to a state of tutelage, as a preliminary to partition, was an effective reminder of the humiliations which they had undergone at the hands of Russia by the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi (1833). France also showed no disposition to join the Russian and Austrian demand that the Sultan should at once re-establish the *status quo;* and by degrees the more intelligent Turks came to see that a strong Bulgaria, independent of Russian control, might be an additional safeguard against the Colossus of the North. Russia's insistence on the exact fulfilment of the Treaty

[1] Parl. Papers, Turkey, No. 1 (1886), pp. 214–215. See, too, *ibid.*, pp. 197 *et seq.* for Lord Salisbury's instructions to Sir William White for the Conference. In view of them it is needless to waste space in refuting the arguments of the Russophil A. G. Grandar, *op. cit.*, p. 147, that England sought to make war between the Balkan States.

of Berlin helped to open their eyes, and lent force to Sir William White's arguments as to the need of strengthening that treaty by "introducing into it a timely improvement."[1]

Owing to the opposition offered by Great Britain, and to some extent by France, to the proposed restoration of the old order of things in Eastern Roumelia, the Conference came to an end at the close of November, the three Imperial Powers blaming Sir William White for his obstructive tactics. The charges will not bear examination, but they show the irritation of those Governments at England's championship of the Bulgarian cause.[2] The Bulgarians always remember the names of Lord Salisbury and Sir William White as those of friends in need.

In the main, however, the consolidation of Bulgaria was achieved by her own stalwart sons. While the Imperial Powers were proposing to put back the hands of the clock, an alarum sounded forth, proclaiming the advent of a new era in the history of the Balkan peoples. The action which brought about this change was startling alike in its inception, in the accompanying incidents, and still more in its results.

Where Abdul Hamid forebore to enter, even as the mandatory of the Continental Courts, there Milan of Servia rushed in. As an excuse for his aggression, the kinglet of Belgrade alleged the harm done to Servian trade by a recent revision of the Bulgarian tariff. But the Powers assessed this complaint and others at their due value, and saw in his action merely the desire to seize a part of Western Bulgaria as a set-off to the recent growth of that Princi-

[1] Parl. Papers, Turkey No. 1 (1886), pp. 273–274, 288, for Russia's policy; p. 284 for Sir W. White's argument.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 370–372.

pality. On all sides his action in declaring war against Prince Alexander (November 14th) met with reprobation, even on the part of his guide and friend, Austria. A recent report of the Hungarian Committee on Foreign Affairs contained a recommendation which implied that he ought to receive compensation; and this seemed to show the wish of the more active part of the Dual Monarchy peacefully but effectively to champion his cause.[1]

Nevertheless, the King decided to carve out his fortunes by his own sword. He had some grounds for confidence. If a Bulgarian *fait accompli* could win tacit recognition from the Powers, why should not a Servian triumph over Bulgaria force their hands once more? Prince Alexander was unsafe on his throne; thanks to the action of Russia his troops had very few experienced officers; and in view of the Sultan's resentment his southern border could not be denuded of troops. Never did a case seem more desperate than that of the "peasant State," deserted and flouted by Russia, disliked by the Sultan, on bad terms with Roumania, and publicly lectured by the Continental Powers for her irregular conduct. Servia's triumph seemed assured.

But now there came forth one more proof of the vitalising force of the national principle. In seven years the down-trodden peasants of Bulgaria had become men, and now astonished the world by their prowess. The withdrawal of the Russian officers left half of the captaincies vacant; but they were promptly filled up by enthusiastic young lieutenants. Owing to the blowing up of the line from Philippopolis to Adrianople, only five locomotives were available for carrying back northwards the troops

[1] Parl. Papers, Turkey, No. 1 (1886), p. 250.

which had hitherto been massed on the southern border; and these five were already overstrained. Yet the engineers now worked them still harder and they did not break down.[1] The hardy peasants tramped impossibly long distances in their longing to meet the Servians. The arrangements were carried through with a success which seems miraculous in an inexperienced race. The explanation was afterwards rightly discerned by an English visitor to Bulgaria. "This is the secret of Bulgarian independence—everybody is in grim earnest. The Bulgarians do not care about amusements."[2] In that remark there is food for thought. Inefficiency has no place among a people that looks to the welfare of the State as all in all. Breakdowns occur when men think more about "sport" and pleasure than about doing their utmost for their country.

The results of this grim earnestness were to astonish the world. The Servians at first gained some successes in front of Widdin and Slivnitza; but the defenders of the latter place (an all-important position northwest of Sophia) hurried up all possible forces. Two Bulgarian regiments are said to have marched 123 kilometres in thirty hours in order to defend that military outwork of their capital; while others, worn out with marching, rode forward on horseback, two men to each horse, and then threw themselves into the fight. The Bulgarian artillery was well served, and proved to be very superior to that of the Servians.

Thus, on the first two days of conflict at Slivnitza, the defenders beat back the Servians with some loss. On the

[1] A. von Huhn, *op. cit.*, p. 105.
[2] E. A. B. Hodgetts, *Round about Armenia*, p. 7.

third day (November 19th), after receiving reinforcements, they took the offensive, with surprising vigour. A talented young officer, Bendereff, led their right wing, with bands playing and colours flying, to storm the hillsides that dominated the Servian position. The hardy peasants scaled the hills and delivered the final bayonet charge so furiously that there and on all sides the invaders fled in wild panic, and scarcely halted until they reached their own frontier.

Thenceforth King Milan had hard work to keep his men together. Many of them were raw troops; their ammunition was nearly exhausted; and their *morale* had vanished utterly. Prince Alexander had little difficulty in thrusting them forth from Pirot, and seemed to have before him a clear road to Belgrade, when suddenly he was brought to a halt by a menace from the north.[1]

A special envoy sent by the Hapsburgs, Count Khevenhuller, came in haste to the headquarters of the Prince on November 28th, and in imperious terms bade him grant an armistice to Servia, otherwise Austrian troops would forthwith cross the frontier to her assistance. Before this threat Alexander gave way, and was blamed by some of his people for this act of complaisance. But assuredly he could not well have acted otherwise. The three Emperors, of late acting in accord in Balkan questions, had it in their power to crush him by launching the Turks against Philippopolis, or their own troops against Sophia. He had satisfied the claims of honour; he had punished Servia for her peevish and unsisterly jealously. Under his lead the Bulgarians had covered themselves with glory and had

[1] Drandar, *Événements politiques en Bulgarie*, pp. 89–116; von Huhn, *op. cit.*, chaps. x., xi.

leaped at a bound from political youth to manhood. Why should he risk their new-found unity merely in order to abase Servia? The Prince never acted more prudently than when he decided not to bring into the field the Power which, as he believed, had pushed on Servia to war.[1]

Had he known that the Russian Chancellor, de Giers, on hearing of Austria's threat to Bulgaria, informed the Court of Vienna of the Czar's condign displeasure if that threat were carried into effect, perhaps he would have played a grand game, advancing on Belgrade, dethroning the already unpopular King Milan, and offering to the Czar the headship of a united Servo-Bulgarian State. He might thus have appeased that sovereign, but at the cost of a European war. Whether from lack of information, or from a sense of prudence and humanity, the Prince held back and decided for peace with Servia. Despite many difficulties thrown in the way by King Milan, this was the upshot of the ensuing negotiations. The two States finally came to terms by the Treaty of Bukharest, where, thanks to the good sense of the negotiators and the efforts of Turkey to compose these strifes, peace was assured on the basis of the *status quo ante bellum* (March 3, 1886).

Already the Porte had manifested its good-will towards Bulgaria in the most signal manner. This complete reversal of policy may be assigned to several causes. Firstly, Prince Alexander, on marching against the Servians, had very tactfully proclaimed that he did so on behalf of the existing order of things, which they were bent on overthrowing. His actions having corresponded to his words, the Porte gradually came to see in him a potent defender against Russia. This change in the attitude of the Sultan

[1] Drandar, *op. cit.*, chap. iii.; Kuhn, *op. cit.*, chap. xviii.

was undoubtedly helped on by the arguments of Lord Salisbury to the Turkish ambassador at London. He summarised the whole case for a recognition of the union of the two Bulgarias in the following remarks (December 23, 1885):

"Every week's experience showed that the Porte had little to dread from the subserviency of Bulgaria to foreign influence, if only Bulgaria were allowed enjoyment of her unanimous desires, and the Porte did not gratuitously place itself in opposition to the general feeling of the people. A Bulgaria friendly to the Porte, and jealous of foreign influence, would be a far surer bulwark against foreign aggression than two Bulgarias, severed in administration, but united in considering the Porte as the only obstacle to their national development." [1]

Events served to reveal the soundness of this statesmanlike pronouncement. At the close of the year Prince Alexander returned from the front to Sophia and received an overwhelming ovation as the champion of Bulgarian liberties. Further, he now found no difficulty in coming to an understanding with the Turkish Commissioners sent to investigate the state of opinion in Southern Bulgaria. Most significant of all was the wrath of the Czar at the sight of his popularity, and the utter collapse of the Russian party at Sophia.

Meanwhile the Powers found themselves obliged little by little to abandon their pedantic resolve to restore the Treaty of Berlin. Sir Robert Morier, British ambassador at St. Petersburg, in a letter of December 27, 1885, to Sir William White, thus commented on the causes that assured success to the Bulgarian cause:

[1] Parl. Papers, Turkey, No. 1 (1886), p. 424.

"The very great prudence shown by Lord Salisbury, and the consummate ability with which you played your part, have made it a successful game; but the one crowning good fortune, which we mainly owe to the incalculable folly of the Servian attack, has been that Prince Alexander's generalship and the fighting capacities of his soldiers have placed our rival action [his own and that of Sir W. White] in perfect harmony with the crushing logic of fact. The rivalry is thus completely swamped in the bit of cosmic work so successfully accomplished. A State has been evolved out of the protoplasm of Balkan chaos."

Sir Robert Morier finally stated that if Sir William White succeeded in building up an independent Bulgaria friendly to Roumania, he would have achieved the greatest feat of diplomacy since Sir James Hudson's statesmanlike moves at Turin in the critical months of 1859–60 gained for England a more influential position in Italy than France had secured by her aid in the campaign of Solferino. The praise is over-strained, inasmuch as it leaves out of count the statecraft of Bismarck in the years 1863–64 and 1869–70; but certainly among the *peaceful* triumphs of recent years that of Sir William White must rank very high.

If, however, we examine the inner cause of the success of the diplomacy of Hudson and White we must assign it in part to the mistakes of the liberating Powers, France and Russia. Napoleon III., by requiring the cession of Savoy and Nice, and by revealing his design to Gallicise the Italian Peninsula, speedily succeeded in alienating the Italians. The action of Russia in compelling Bulgaria to give up the Dobrudscha, as an equivalent to the part of Bessarabia which she took from Roumania, also strained

the sense of gratitude of those peoples; and the conduct of Muscovite agents in Bulgaria provoked in that Principality feelings bitterer than those which the Italians felt at the loss of Savoy and Nice. So true is it that in public as in private life the manner in which a wrong is inflicted counts for more than the wrong itself. It was on this sense of resentment (misnamed "ingratitude" by the "liberators") that British diplomacy worked with telling effect in both cases. It conferred on the "liberated" substantial benefits: but their worth was doubled by the contrast which they offered to the losses or the irritation consequent on the actions of Napoleon III. and of Alexander III.

To the present writer it seems that the great achievements of Sir William White were, first, that he kept the Sultan quiet (a course, be it remarked, from which that nervous recluse was never averse) when Nelidoff sought to hound him on against Bulgaria; and, still more, that he helped to bring about a good understanding between Constantinople and Sophia. In view of the hatred which Abdul Hamid bore to England after her intervention in Egypt in 1882, this was certainly a great diplomatic achievement; but possibly Abdul Hamid hoped to reap advantages on the Nile from his complaisance to British policy in the Balkans.

The outcome of it all was the framing of a Turco-Bulgarian Convention (February 1, 1886) whereby the Porte recognised Prince Alexander as Governor of Eastern Roumelia for a term of five years; a few border districts in Rhodope, inhabited by Moslems, were ceded to the Sultan, and (wonder of wonders!) Turkey and Bulgaria concluded an offensive and defensive alliance. In case of foreign aggression on Bulgaria, Turkish troops would be

sent thither to be commanded by the Prince; if Turkey were invaded, Bulgarian troops would form part of the Sultan's army repelling the invader. In other respects the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin remained in force for Southern Bulgaria.[1]

On that same day, as it chanced, the Salisbury Cabinet resigned office, and Mr. Gladstone became Prime Minister, Lord Rosebery taking the portfolio for Foreign Affairs. This event produced little variation in Britain's Eastern policy, and that statement will serve to emphasise the importance of the change of attitude of the Conservative party towards those affairs in the years 1878–85, a change undoubtedly due in the main to the Marquis of Salisbury.

In the official notes of the Earl of Rosebery there is manifest somewhat more complaisance to Russia, as when on February 12th he instructed Sir William White to advise the Porte to modify its convention with Bulgaria by abandoning the stipulation as to mutual military aid. Doubtless this advice was sound. It coincided with the known opinions of the Court of Vienna; and at the same time Russia formally declared that she could never accept that condition.[2] As Germany took the same view the Porte agreed to expunge the obnoxious clause. The Government of the Czar also objected to the naming of Prince Alexander in the Convention. This unlooked-for slight naturally aroused the indignation of the Prince; but as the British Government deferred to Russian views on this matter, the Convention was finally signed at Constantinople on April 5, 1886. The Powers, including Turkey, thereby recognised "the Prince of Bulgaria" (not named) as Governor of Eastern Roumelia for a term of five years,

[1] Parl. Papers, Turkey, No. 2 (1886). [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 96–98.

and referred the "Organic Statute" of that province to revision by a joint Conference.

The Prince submitted to this arrangement, provisional and humiliating though it was. But the insults inflicted by Russia bound him the more closely to his people; and at the united Parliament, where 182 members out of the total 300 supported his Ministers, he advocated measures that would cement the union. Bulgarian soon became the official language throughout South Bulgaria, to the annoyance of the Greek and Turkish minorities. But the chief cause of unrest continued to be the intrigues of Russian agents.

The anger of the Czar at the success of his hated kinsman showed itself in various ways. Not content with inflicting every possible slight and disturbing the peace of Bulgaria through his agents, he even menaced Europe with war over that question. At Sevastopol on May 19th, he declared that circumstances might compel him "to defend by force of arms the dignity of the Empire"—a threat probably aimed at Bulgaria and Turkey. On his return to Moscow he received an enthusiastic welcome from the fervid Slavophils of the old Russian capital, the Mayor expressing in his address the hope that "the cross of Christ will soon shine on St. Sophia" at Constantinople. At the end of June the Russian Government repudiated the clause of the Treaty of Berlin constituting Batoum a free port.[1] Despite a vigorous protest by Lord Rosebery against this infraction of treaty engagements, the Czar and M. de Giers held to their resolve, evidently by way of retort to the help given from London to the union of the two Bulgarias.

The Dual Monarchy, especially Hungary, also felt the

[1] Parl. Papers, Russia (1886), p. 828.

weight of Russia's displeasure in return for the sympathy manifested for the Prince at Pesth and Vienna; and but for the strength which the friendship of Germany afforded, that Power would almost certainly have encountered war from the irate potentate of the North.

Turkey, having no champion, was in still greater danger; her conduct in condoning the irregularities of Prince Alexander was as odious to Alexander III. as the atrocities of her Bashi-bazouks ten years before had been to his more chivalrous sire. It is an open secret that during the summer of 1886 the Czar was preparing to deal a heavy blow. The Sultan evaded it by adroitly shifting his ground and posing as a well-wisher of the Czar, whereupon M. Nelidoff, the Russian ambassador at Constantinople, proposed an offensive and defensive alliance, and went to the length of suggesting that they should wage war against Austria and England in order to restore the Sultan's authority over Bosnia and Egypt at the expense of those intrusive Powers. How far negotiations went on this matter and why they failed is not known. The ordinary explanation, that the Czar forbore to draw the sword because of his love of peace, hardly tallies with what is now known of his character and his diplomacy. It is more likely that he was appeased by the events now to be described, and thereafter attached less importance to a direct intervention in Balkan affairs.

No greater surprise has happened in this generation than the kidnapping of Prince Alexander by officers of the army which he had lately led to victory. Yet the affair admits of explanation. Certain of their number nourished resentment against him for his imperfect recognition of their

services during the Servian War, and for the introduction of German military instructors at its close. Among the malcontents was Bendereff, the hero of Slivnitza, who, having been guilty of discourtesy to the Prince, was left unrewarded. On this discontented knot of men Russian intriguers fastened themselves profitably, with the result that one regiment at least began to waver in its allegiance.

A military plot was held in reserve as a last resort. In the first place, a Russian subject, Captain Nabokoff, sought to simplify the situation by hiring some Montenegrin desperadoes, and by seeking to murder or carry off the Prince as he drew near to Bourgas during a tour in Eastern Bulgaria. This plan came to light through the fidelity of a Bulgarian peasant, whereupon Nabokoff and a Montenegrin priest were arrested (May 18th). At once the Russian Consul at that seaport appeared, demanded the release of the conspirators, and, when this was refused, threatened the Bulgarian authorities if justice took its course. It is not without significance that the Czar's warlike speech at Sevastapol startled the world on the day after the arrest of the conspirators at Bourgas. Apparently the arrest of Nabokoff impelled the Czar of all the Russias to uphold the dignity of his Empire by hurling threats against a State which protected itself from conspiracy. The champion of order in Russia thereby figured as the abettor of plotters in the Balkans.

The menaces of the Northern Power availed to defer the trial of the conspirators, and the affair was still undecided when the conspirators at Sophia played their last card. Bendereff was at that time acting as Minister of War, and found means to spread broadcast a rumour that Servia was arming as if for war. Sending northwards some

faithful troops to guard against this baseless danger, he left the capital at the mercy of the real enemy.

On August 21st, when all was ready, the Struma Regiment hastily marched back by night to Sophia, disarmed the few faithful troops there in garrison, surrounded the palace of the Prince, while the ringleaders burst into his bedchamber. He succeeded in fleeing through a corridor which led to the garden, only to be met with levelled bayonets and cries of hatred. The leaders thrust him into a corner, tore a sheet out of the visitors' book which lay on a table close by, and on it hastily scrawled words implying abdication; the Prince added his signature, along with the prayer, "God save Bulgaria." At dawn the mutineers forced him into a carriage, Bendereff and his accomplices crowding round to dismiss him with jeers and screen him from the sight of the public. Thence he was driven at the utmost speed through byways towards the Danube. There the conspirators had in readiness his own yacht, which they had seized, and carried him down the stream towards Russian territory.

The outburst of indignation with which the civilised world heard of this foul deed had its counterpart in Bulgaria. So general and so keen was the reprobation (save in the Russian and Bismarckian press) that the Russian Government took some steps to dissociate itself from the plot, while profiting by its results. On August 24th, when the Prince was put on shore at Reni, the Russian authorities kept him under guard, and that, too, despite an order of the Czar empowering him to "continue his journey exactly as he might please." Far from this, he was detained for some little time, and then was suffered to depart by train only in a northerly direction. He ultimately en-

tered Austrian territory by way of Lemberg in Galicia, on August 27th. The aim of the St. Petersburg Government evidently was to give full time for the conspirators at Sophia to consolidate their power.[1]

Meanwhile, by military display, the distribution of money, and a *Te Deum* at the Cathedral for "liberation from Prince Battenberg," the mutineers sought to persuade the men of Sophia that peace and prosperity would infallibly result from the returning favour of the Czar. The populace accepted the first tokens of his good-will and awaited developments. These were not promising for the mutineers. The British Consul at Philippopolis, Captain Jones, on hearing of the affair, hurried to the commander of the garrison, General Mutkuroff, and besought him to crush the plotters.[2] The General speedily enlisted his own troops and those in garrison elsewhere on the side of the Prince, with the result that a large part of the army refused to take the oath of allegiance to the new Russophil Ministry, composed of trimmers like Bishop Clement and Zankoff. Karaveloff also cast in his influence against them.

Above all, Stambuloff worked furiously for the Prince; and when a mitred Vicar of Bray held the seals of office and enjoyed the official counsels of traitors and place-hunters, not all the prayers of the Greek Church and the gold of Russian agents could long avail to support the Government against the attacks of that strong-willed, clean-handed patriot. Shame at the disgrace thus brought on his people doubled his powers; and, with the aid of all that was best in the public life of Bulgaria, he succeeded in

[1] A. von Huhn, *op. cit.*, chap. iv.

[2] See Mr. Minchin's account in the *Morning Advertiser* for September 23, 1886.

sweeping Clement and his Comus rout back to their mummeries and their underground plots. So speedy was the reverse of fortune that the new Provisional Government succeeded in thwarting the despatch of a Russian special Commissioner, General Dolgorukoff, through whom Alexander III. sought to bestow the promised blessings on that "much-tried" Principality.

The voice of Bulgaria now made itself heard. There was but one cry—for the return of Prince Alexander. At once he consented to fulfil his people's desire; and, travelling by railway through Bukharest, he reached the banks of the Danube and set foot on his yacht, not now a prisoner, but the hero of the German, Magyar, and Balkan peoples. At Rustchuk officers and deputies bore him ashore shoulder-high to the enthusiastic people. He received a welcome even from the Consul-General for Russia—a fact which led him to take a false step. Later in the day, when Stambuloff was not present, he had an interview with this agent, and then sent a telegram to the Czar, announcing his return, his thanks for his friendly reception by Russia's chief agent, and his readiness to accept the advice of General Dolgorukoff. The telegram ended thus:

"I should be happy to be able to give to Your Majesty the definitive proof of the devotion with which I am animated towards Your august person. The monarchical principle forces me to re-establish the reign of law (*la légalité*) in Bulgaria and Roumelia. Russia having given me my crown, I am ready to give it back into the hand of its Sovereign."

To this the Czar sent the following telegraphic reply, and allowed it to appear at once in the official paper at St. Petersburg:

"I have received Your Highness's telegram. I cannot approve your return to Bulgaria, as I foresee the sinister consequences that it may bring on Bulgaria, already so much tried. The mission of General Dolgorukoff is now inopportune. I shall abstain from it in the sad state of things to which Bulgaria is reduced so long as you remain there. Your Highness will understand what you have to do. I reserve my judgment as to what is commanded me by the venerated memory of my father, the interests of Russia, and the peace of the Orient."[1]

What led the Prince to use the extraordinary words contained in the last sentence of his telegram can only be conjectured. The substance of his conversation with the Russian Consul-General is not known; and until the words of that official are fully explained he must be held open to the suspicion of having played on the Prince a diplomatic version of the confidence trick. Another version, that of M. Élie de Cyon, is that he acted on instructions from the Russian Chancellor, de Giers, who believed that the Czar would relent. On the contrary, he broke loose, and sent the answer given above.[2]

It is not surprising that, after receiving the Czar's retort, the Prince seemed gloomy and depressed where all around him were full of joy. At Tirnova and Philippopolis he had the same reception; but an attempt to derail his train on

[1] A. von Huhn, *The Kidnapping of Prince Alexander*, chap. xi. (London, 1887).

Article III. of the Treaty of Berlin ran thus: "The Prince of Bulgaria shall be freely elected by the population and confirmed by the Sublime Porte, with the assent of the Powers." Russia had no right to *choose* the Prince, and her *assent* to his election was only that of *one* among the six Great Powers. The mistake of Prince Alexander is therefore inexplicable.

[2] *Histoire de l'Entente franco-russe*, by Élie de Cyon, p. 185.

the journey to Sophia showed that the malice of his foes was still unsated. The absence of the Russian and German Consuls from the State reception accorded to the Prince at the capital on September 3rd showed that he had to reckon with the hostility or disapprobation of those Governments; and there was the ominous fact that the Russian agent at Sophia had recently intervened to prevent the punishment of the mutineers and Bishop Clement. Few, however, were prepared for what followed. On entering his palace, the Prince called his officers about him and announced that, despairing of overcoming the antipathy of the Czar to him, he must abdicate. Many of them burst into tears, and one of them cried, "Without your Highness there is no Bulgaria."

This action, when the Prince seemed at the height of popularity, caused intense astonishment. The following are the reasons that probably dictated it: First, he may have felt impelled to redeem the pledges which he too trustfully made to the Czar in his Rustchuk telegram, and of which that potentate took so unchivalrous an advantage. Second, the intervention of Russia to protect the mutineers from their just punishment betokened her intention to foment further plots. In this intervention, strange to say, she had the support of the German Government, Bismarck using his influence at Berlin persistently against the Prince, in order to avert the danger of war, which once or twice seemed to be imminent between Russia and Germany.

Further, we may note that Austria and the other States had no desire to court an attack from the Eastern Power, on account of a personal affair between the two Alexanders. Great Britain also was at that time too hampered by

domestic and colonial difficulties to be able to do more than offer good wishes.

Thus the weakness or the weariness of the States friendly to Bulgaria left the Czar a free hand in the personal feud on which he set such store. Accordingly, on September 7th, the Prince left Bulgaria amidst the lamentations of that usually stolid people and the sympathy of manly hearts throughout the world. At Buda-Pesth and London there were ominous signs that the Czar must not push his triumph further. Herr Tisza at the end of the month assured the Hungarian deputies that, if the Sultan did not choose to restore the old order of things in Southern Bulgaria, no other Power had the right to intervene there by force of arms. Lord Salisbury, also, at the Lord Mayor's banquet, on November 9th, inveighed with startling frankness against the "officers debauched by foreign gold," who had betrayed their Prince. He further stated that all interest in foreign affairs centred in Bulgaria, and expressed the belief that the freedom of that State would be assured.

These speeches were certainly intended as a warning to Russia and a protest against her action in Bulgaria. After the departure of Prince Alexander, the Czar hit upon the device of restoring order to that "much-tried" country through the instrumentality of General Kaulbars, a brother of the General who had sought to kidnap Prince Alexander three years before. It is known that the despatch of the younger Kaulbars was distasteful to the more pacific and Germanophil Chancellor, de Giers, who is said to have worked against the success of his mission. Such at least is the version given by his private enemies, Katkoff and de Cyon.[1] Kaulbars soon succeeded in adding

[1] Élie de Cyon, *Histoire de l'Entente franco-russe*, pp. 177–178.

to the reputation of his family. On reaching Sophia, on September 25th, he ordered the liberation of the military plotters still under arrest, and the adjournment of the forthcoming elections for the Sobranje; otherwise Russia would not regard them as legal. The Bulgarian Regents, Stambuloff at their head, stoutly opposed these demands and fixed the elections for October the 10th; whereupon Kaulbars treated the men of Sophia, and thereafter of all the chief towns, to displays of bullying rhetoric, which succeeded in blotting out all memories of Russian exploits of nine years before.[1]

Despite his menace that 100,000 Russian troops were ready to occupy Bulgaria, despite the murder of four patriots by his bravos at Dubnitza, Bulgaria flung back the threats by electing 470 supporters of independence and unity, as against 30 Russophils and 20 deputies of doubtful views. The Sobranje met at Tirnova, and, disregarding his protest, proceeded to elect Prince Waldemar of Denmark; it then confirmed Stambuloff in his almost dictatorial powers. The Czar's influence over the Danish Royal House led to the Prince promptly refusing that dangerous honour, which it is believed that Russia then designed for the Prince of Mingrelia, a dignitary of Russian Caucasia.

The aim of the Czar and of Kaulbars now was to render all government impossible; but they had to deal with a man far more resolute and astute than Prince Alexander. Stambuloff and his countrymen fairly wearied out Kaulbars, until that imperial agent was suddenly recalled

[1] The Russophil Drandar (*op. cit.*, p. 214) calls these demands "remarqueblement modérées et sages"! For further details of Kaulbars's electioneering devices, see Minchin, *op. cit.*, pp. 327–330.

(November 19th). He also ordered the Russian Consuls to withdraw.

It is believed that the Czar recalled him partly because of the obvious failure of a hectoring policy, but also owing to the growing restlessness of Austria-Hungary, England, and Italy at Russia's treatment of Bulgaria. For several months European diplomacy turned on the question of Bulgaria's independence; and here Russia could not yet count on a French alliance. As has been noted above, Alexander III. and de Giers had tied their hands by the alliance contracted at Skiernewice in 1884; and the Czar had reason to expect that the Austro-German compact would hold good against him if he forced on his solution of the Balkan Question.

Probably it was this consideration which led him to trust to underground means for assuring the dependence of Bulgaria. If so, he was again disappointed. Stambuloff met his agents everywhere, above ground and below ground. That son of an innkeeper at Tirnova now showed a power of inspiring men and controlling events equal to that of the innkeeper of the Pusterthal, Andreas Hofer. The discouraged Bulgarians everywhere responded to his call; at Rustchuk they crushed a rising of Russophil officers, and Stambuloff had nine of the rebels shot (March 7, 1887). Thereafter he acted as dictator and imprisoned numbers of suspects. His countrymen put up with the loss of civic freedom in order to secure the higher boon of national independence.

In the main, however, the freedom of Bulgaria from Russian control was due to events transpiring in Central Europe. As will appear in Chapter XII. of this work, the Czar and de Giers became convinced, early in the year

1887, that Bismarck was preparing for war against France, and they determined to hold aloof from other questions, in order to be free to checkmate the designs of the war party at Berlin. The organ usually inspired by de Giers, the *Nord*, uttered an unmistakable warning on February 20, 1887, and even stated that, with this aim in view, Russia would let matters take their course in Bulgaria.

Thus, once again, the complexities of the general situation promoted the cause of freedom in the Balkans; and the way was cleared for a resolute man to mount the throne at Sophia. In the course of a tour to the European capitals, a Bulgarian delegation found that man. The envoys were informed that Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg, a grandson of Louis Philippe on the spindle side, would welcome the dangerous honour. He was young, ambitious, and, as events were to prove, equally tactful and forceful according to circumstances. In vain did Russia seek to prevent his election by pushing on the Sultan to intervene. Abdul Hamid was not the man to let himself long be the catspaw of Russia, and now invited the Powers to name one or two candidates for the throne of Bulgaria. Stambuloff worked hard for the election of Prince Ferdinand; and on July 7, 1887, he was unanimously elected by the Sobranje. Alone among the Great Powers, Russia protested against his election and threw many difficulties in his path. In order to please the Czar, the Sultan added his protest; but this act was soon seen to be merely a move in the diplomatic game.

Limits of space, however, preclude the possibility of noting later events in the history of Bulgaria, such as the coolness that clouded the relations of the Prince to Stambuloff, the murder of the latter, and the final recognition

of the Prince by the Russian Government after the "conversion" of his little son, Boris, to the Greek Church (February, 1896). In this curious way was fulfilled the prophetic advice given by Bismarck to the Prince not long after his acceptance of the crown of Bulgaria: "Play the dead (*faire mort*). . . . Let yourself be driven gently by the stream, and keep yourself, as hitherto, above water. Your greatest ally is time—force of habit. Avoid everything that might irritate your enemies. Unless you give them provocation, they cannot do you much harm, and in course of time, the world will become accustomed to see you on the throne of Bulgaria."[1]

Time has worked on behalf of Bulgaria, and has helped to strengthen this Benjamin of the European family. Among the events which have made the chief States of to-day, none are more remarkable than those which endowed a population of downtrodden peasants with a passionate desire for national existence. Thanks to the liberating armies of Russia, to the prowess of Bulgarians themselves, to the inspiring personality of Prince Alexander and the stubborn tenacity of Stambuloff, the young State gained a firm grip on life. But other and stranger influences were at work compelling that people to act for itself; these are to be found in the perverse conduct of Alexander III. and his agents. The policy of Russia towards Bulgaria may be characterised by a remark made by Sir Robert Morier to Sir M. Grant Duff in 1888: "Russia is a great bicephalic creature, having one head European, and the other Asiatic, but with the persistent habit of turning its European face to the East, and its Asiatic face

[1] *Personal Reminiscences of Prince Bismarck*, by S. Whitman, p. 179.

to the West."[1] Asiatic methods, put in force against Slavised Tartars, have certainly played no small part in the upbuilding of this youngest of the European States.

In taking leave of the Balkan peoples, we may note the strange tendency of events towards equipoise in the Europe of the present age. Thirty years ago the Turkish Empire seemed at the point of dissolution. To-day it is stronger than ever; and the cause is to be found, not so much in the watchful cunning of Abdul Hamid, as in the vivifying principle of nationality, which has made of Bulgaria and Roumania two strong barriers against Russian aggression in that quarter. The feuds of those States have been replaced by something like friendship, which in its turn will probably ripen into alliance. Together they could put 250,000 good troops in the field, that is, a larger force than that which the Turks had in Europe during the war with Russia. Turkey is therefore fully as safe as she was under Abdul Aziz.

An enlightened ruler could consolidate her position still further. Just as Austria has gained in strength by having Venetia as a friendly and allied land, rather than a subject province heaving with discontent, so, too, it is open to the Porte to secure the alliance of the Balkan States by treating them in an honourable way, and by according good government to Macedonia.

Possibly the future may see the formation of a federation of all the States of European Turkey. If so, Russia will lose all foothold in a quarter where she formerly had the active support of three-fourths of the population. However that may be, it is certain that her mistakes in and after the year 1878 have profoundly modified the Eastern

[1] Sir M. Grant Duff, *Notes from a Diary* (1886–88), ii., p. 139.

Question. They have served to cancel those which, as it seems to the present writer, Lord Beaconsfield committed in the years 1876–77; and the skilful diplomacy of Lord Salisbury and Sir William White has regained for England the prestige which she then lost among the rising peoples of the Peninsula.

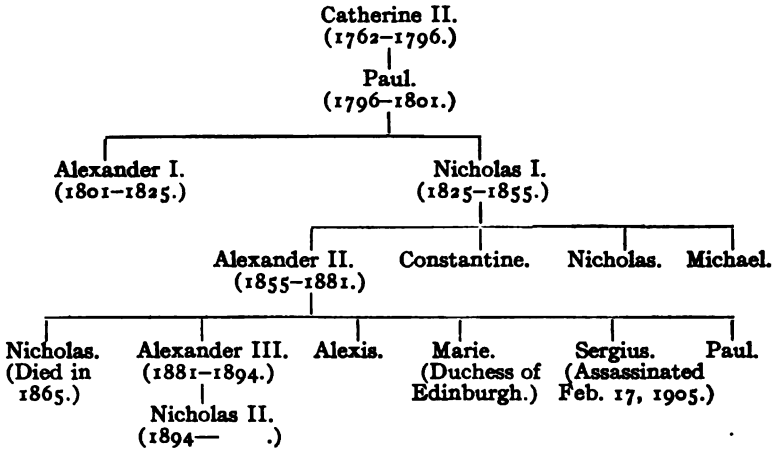
The final solution of the tangled racial problems of Macedonia cannot be long deferred, in spite of the timorous selfishness of the Powers who incurred treaty obligations for the welfare of that land; and, when that question can be no longer postponed or explained away, it is to be hoped that the British people, taking heed of the lessons of the past, will insist on a solution that will conform to the claims of humanity, which have been proved to be those of enlightened statesmanship.[1]

[1] For the recent developments of the Macedonian Question, see *Turkey in Europe*, by "Odysseus" (1900); *The Middle Eastern Question*, by V. Chirol, 18s. net (Murray); *A Tour in Macedonia*, by G. F. Abbot (1903); *The Burden of the Balkans*, by Miss Edith Durham (1904); *The Balkans from Within*, by R. Wyon (1904); *The Balkan Question*, edited by L. Villari (1904); *Critical Times in Turkey*, by G. King-Lewis (1904); *Pro Macedonia*, by V. Bérard (Paris, 1904); *La Péninsule balkanique*, by Capitaine Lamouche (Paris, 1899).

CHAPTER XI

NIHILISM AND ABSOLUTISM IN RUSSIA

THE HOUSE OF ROMANOFF



THE Whig statesman, Charles James Fox, once made the profound though seemingly paradoxical assertion that the most dangerous part of a revolution was the restoration that ended it. In a similar way we may hazard the statement that the greatest danger brought about by war lies in the period of peace immediately following. Just as the strain involved by any physical effort is most felt when the muscles and nerves resume their normal action, so, too, the body politic is liable to depression when once the time of excitement is over and

the artificial activities of war give place to the tiresome work of paying the bill. England after Waterloo, France and Germany after the War of 1870, afford examples of this truth; but never perhaps has it been more signally illustrated than in the Russia of 1878–82.

There were several reasons why the reaction should be especially sharp in Russia. The Slav peoples that form the great bulk of her population are notoriously sensitive. Shut up for nearly half the year by the rigours of winter, they naturally develop habits of brooding introspection or coarse animalism—witness the plaintive strains of their folk-songs, the pessimism that haunts their literature, and the dram-drinking habits of the peasantry. The Muscovite temperament and the Muscovite climate naturally lead to idealist strivings against the hardships of life or a dull grovelling amongst them. Melancholy or vodka is the outcome of it all.

The giant of the East was first aroused to a consciousness of his strength by the invasion of Napoleon the Great. The comparative ease with which the Grand Army was engulfed left on the national mind of Russia a consciousness of pride never to be lost even amidst the cruel disappointments of the Crimean War. Holy Russia had once beaten back the forces of Europe marshalled by the greatest captain of all time. She was therefore a match for the rest of the continent. Such was the belief of every patriotic Muscovite. As for the Turks, they were not worthy of entering the lists against the soldiers of the Czar. Did not every decade bring further proofs of the decline of the Ottomans in governing capacity and military prowess? They might harry Bulgarian peasants and win laurels over the Servian militia. But how could that bankrupt

State and its undisciplined hordes hold up against the might of Russia and the fervour of her liberating legions?

After the indulgence of these day-dreams the disillusionment caused by the events at Plevna came the more cruelly. One general after another became the scapegoat for the popular indignation. Then the general staff was freely censured, and whispers went round that the Grand Duke Nicholas, brother of the Czar, was not only incompetent to conduct a great war, but guilty of underhand dealings with the contractors, who defrauded the troops and battened on the public funds. Letters from the rank and file showed that the bread was bad, the shoes were rotten, the rifles outclassed by those of the Turks, and that trenching-tools were lacking for many precious weeks.[1] Then, too, the Bulgarian peasants were found to be in a state of comfort superior to that of the bulk of their liberators—a discovery which aroused in the Russian soldiery feelings like those of the troops of the old French monarchy when they fought side by side with the soldiers of Washington for the triumph of democracy in the New World. In both cases the lessons were stored up, to be used when the champions of liberty returned home and found the old order of things clanking on as slowly and rustily as ever.

Finally, there came the crushing blow of the Treaty of Berlin. The Russian people had fought for an ideal: they longed to see the cross take the place of the crescent which for five centuries had flashed defiance to Christendom from the summit of St. Sophia at Constantinople. But Britain's

[1] *Russia Before and After the War*, translated by E. F. Taylor (London, 1880), chap. xvi.: "We have been cheated by blockheads, robbed by people whose incapacity was even greater than their villainy."

ironclads, Austria's legions, and German diplomacy barred the way in the very hour of triumph; and Russia drew back. To the Slav enthusiasts of Moscow even the Treaty of San Stefano had seemed a dereliction of a sacred duty; that of Berlin seemed the most cowardly of betrayals. As the Princess Radziwill confesses in her *Recollections*, that event made Nihilism possible.

As usual, the populace, whether reactionary Slavophils or Liberals of the type of Western Europe, vented its spleen on the Government. For a time the strongest bureaucracy in Europe was driven to act on the defensive. The Czar returned stricken with asthma and prematurely aged by the privations and cares of the campaign. The Grand Duke Nicholas was recalled from his command, and, after bearing the signs of studied hostility of the Czarevitch, was exiled to his estates in February, 1879. The Government inspired contempt rather than fear; and a new spirit of independence pervaded all classes. This was seen even as far back as February, 1878, in the acquittal of Vera Zazulich, a lady who had shot the Chief of Police at St. Petersburg, by a jury consisting of nobles and high officials; and the verdict, given in the face of damning evidence, was generally approved. Similar crimes occurred nearly every week.[1] Everything, therefore, favoured the designs of those who sought to overthrow all government. In a word, the outcome of the war was Nihilism.

The father of this sombre creed was a wealthy Russian landlord named Bakunin; or rather, he shares this

[1] *Russia Before and After the War*, chap. xvii. The Government thereafter dispensed with the ordinary forms of justice for political crimes and judged them by special commissions.

doubtful honour with the Frenchman Prudhon. Bakunin, who was born in 1814, entered on active life in the time of soulless repression inaugurated by the Czar Nicholas I. (1825–1855). Disgusted by Russian bureaucracy, the youth eagerly drank in the philosophy of Western Europe, especially that of Hegel. During a residence at Paris he embraced and developed Prudhon's creed that "property is theft," and sought to prepare the way for a crusade against all governments by forming the Alliance of Social Democracy (1869), which speedily became merged in the famous "Internationale." Driven successively from France and Central Europe, he was finally handed over to the Russians and sent to Siberia; thence he escaped to Japan and came to England, finally settling in Switzerland. His writings and speeches did much to rouse the Slavs of Austria, Poland, and Russia to a sense of their national importance, and to the duty of overthrowing the Governments that cramped their energies.

As in the case of Prudohn, his zeal for the non-existent and hatred of the actual bordered on madness, as when he included most of the results of art, literature, and science in his comprehensive anathemas. Nevertheless his crusade for destruction appealed to no small part of the sensitive peoples of the Slavonic race, who, differing in many details, yet all have a dislike of repression and a longing to have their "fling."[1] A union in a Panslavonic League for the overthrow of the Houses of Romanoff, Hapsburg, and Hohenzollern promised to satisfy the vague longings of that much-baffled race, whose name, denoting "glorious," had become the synonym for servitude of the lowest type.

[1] For this peculiarity and a consequent tendency to extremes, see Prof. G. Brandes, *Impressions of Russia*, p. 22.

Such was the creed that disturbed Eastern and Central Europe throughout the period 1847–78, now and again developing a kind of iconoclastic frenzy among its votaries.

This revolutionary creed absorbed another of a different kind. The second creed was scientific and self-centred; it had its origin in the Liberal movement of the sixties, when reforms set in, even in governmental circles. The Czar, Alexander II., in 1861 freed the serfs from the control of their lords, and allotted to them part of the plots which they had hitherto worked on a servile tenure. For various reasons, which we cannot here detail, the peasants were far from satisfied with this change, weighted, as it was, by somewhat onerous terms, irksome restrictions, and warped sometimes by dishonest or hostile officials. Limited powers of local government were also granted in 1864 to the local Zemstvos or land-organisations; but these again failed to satisfy the new cravings for a real system of self-government; and the Czar, seeing that his work produced more ferment than gratitude, began at the close of the sixties to fall back into the old absolutist ways.[1]

At that time, too, a band of writers, of whom the novelist Turgenieff is the best known, were extolling the triumphs of scientific research and the benefits of Western democracy. He it was who adapted to scientific or ethical use the word "Nihilism" (already in use in France to designate Prudhon's theories), so as to represent the revolt of the individual against the religious creed and patriarchal customs of Old Russia. "The fundamental principle of Nihilism," says "Stepniak," "was absolute individualism. It was

[1] See Wallace's *Russia*, 2 vols.; *Russia Under the Czars*, by "Stepniak," ii., chap. xxix.; also two lectures on Russian affairs by Prof. Vinogradoff, in *Lectures on the History of the Nineteenth Century* (Camb., 1902).

the negation, in the name of individual liberty, of all the obligations imposed upon the individual by society, by family life, and by religion." [1]

For a time these disciples of Darwin and Herbert Spencer were satisfied with academic protests against autocracy; but the uselessness of such methods soon became manifest; the influence of professors and philosophic Epicureans could never permeate the masses of Russia and stir them to their dull depths. What "the intellectuals" needed was a creed which would appeal to the many.

This they gained mainly from Bakunin. He had pointed the way to what seemed a practical policy, the ownership of the soil of Russia by the Mirs, the communes of her myriad villages. As to methods, he advocated a propaganda of violence. "Go among the people," he said, " and convert them to your aims." The example of the Paris communists in 1871 enforced his pleas; and in the subsequent years thousands of students, many of them of the highest families, quietly left their homes, donned the peasant's garb, smirched their faces, tarred their hands, and went into the villages or the factories in the hope of stirring up the thick sedimentary deposit of the Russian system.[2] In many cases their utmost efforts ended in failure, the tragi-comedy of which is finely set forth in Turgenieff's *Virgin Soil*. Still more frequently their goal proved to be

[1] *Underground Russia*, by "Stepniak," Introduction, p. 4. Or, as Turgenieff phrased it in one of his novels: "a Nihilist is a man who submits to no authority, who accepts not a single principle upon faith merely, however high such a principle may stand in the eyes of men." In short, a Nihilist was an extreme individualist and rationalist.

[2] *Russia in Revolution*, by G. H. Perriss, pp. 204–206, 210–214; Arnaudo, *Il Nihilismo* (Turin, 1879). See, too, the chapters added by Sir D. M. Wallace to the new edition of his work, *Russia* (1905).

—Siberia. But these young men and women did not toil for nought. Their efforts hastened the absorption of philosophic Nihilism in the creed of Prudhon and Bakunin. The Nihilist of Turgenieff's day had been a hedonist of the clubs, or a harmless weaver of scientific Utopias; the Nihilist of the new age was that most dangerous of men, a desperado girt with a fighting creed.

The fusing of these two diverse elements was powerfully helped on by the white heat of indignation that glowed throughout Russia when details of the official peculation and mismanagement of the war with Turkey became known. Everything combined to discredit the Government; and enthusiasts of all kinds felt that the days for scientific propaganda and stealthy agitation were past. Voltaire must give way to Marat. It was time for the bomb and the dagger to do their work.

The new Nihilists organised an executive committee for the removal of the most obnoxious officials. Its success was startling. To name only a few of their chief deeds: on August 15, 1878, a Chief of the Police was slain near one of the imperial palaces at the capital; and in February, 1879, the Governor of Kharkov was shot, the Nihilists succeeding in announcing his condemnation by placards mysteriously posted up in every large town. In vain did the Government intervene and substitute a military commission in place of trial by jury. Exile and hanging only made the Nihilists more daring, and on more than one occasion the Czar nearly fell a victim to these desperadoes.

The most astounding of these attempts was the explosion of a mine under the banqueting-hall of the Winter Palace at St. Petersburg on the evening of February 17, 1880, when the imperial family escaped owing to a delay in the

arrival of the Grand Duke of Hesse. Ten soldiers were killed and forty-eight wounded in and near the guard-room.

The Czar answered outrage by terrorism. A week after this outrage he issued a ukase suspending the few remaining rights of local self-government hitherto spared by the reaction, and vesting practically all executive powers in a special commission, presided over by General Loris Melikoff. This man was an Armenian by descent, and had distinguished himself as commander in the recent war in Asia, the capture of Kars being largely due to his dispositions. To these warlike gifts, uncommon in the Armenians of to-day, he added administrative abilities of a high order. Enjoying in a peculiar degree the confidence of Alexander II., he was charged with the supervision of all political trials and a virtual control of all the governors-general of the Empire. Thereupon the central committee of the Nihilists proclaimed war *à outrance* until the Czar conceded to a popularly elected National Assembly the right to reform the life of Russia.

Here was the strength of the Nihilist party. By violent means it sought to extort what a large proportion of the townsfolk wished for and found no means of demanding in a lawful manner. Loris Melikoff, gifted with the shrewdness of his race, saw that the Government would effect little by terrorism alone. Wholesale arrests, banishment, and hangings only added to the number of the disaffected, especially as the condemned went to their doom with a calm heroism that inspired the desire of imitation or revenge. Repression must clearly be accompanied by reforms that would bridge over the gulf ever widening between the Government and the thinking classes of the people. He began by persuading the Emperor to release

several hundreds of suspects and to relax the severe measures adopted against the students of the universities. Lastly, he sought to induce the Czar to establish representative institutions, for which even the nobles were beginning to petition. Little by little he familiarised him with the plan of extending the system of the Zemstvos, so that there should be elective councils for towns and provinces, as well as delegations from the provincial *noblesse*. He did not propose to democratise the Central Government. In his scheme the deputies of nobles and representatives of provinces and towns were to send delegates to the Council of State, a purely consultative body which Alexander I. had founded in 1802.

Despite the tentative nature of these proposals, and the favourable reception accorded to them by the Council of State, the Czar for several days withheld his assent. On March 9th he signed the ukase, only to postpone its publication until March 12th. Not until the morning of March 13th did he give the final order for its publication in the *Messager Officiel*. It was his last act as lawgiver. On that day (March 1st, and Sunday, in the Russian calendar) he went to the usual military parade, despite the earnest warnings of the Czarevitch and Loris Melikoff as to a rumoured Nihilist plot. To their pleadings he returned the answer, "Only Providence can protect me, and when it ceases to do so, these Cossacks cannot possibly help." On his return, alongside of the Catherine Canal, a bomb was thrown under his carriage; the explosion tore the back off the carriage, injuring some of his Cossack escort, but leaving the Emperor unhurt. True to his usual feelings of compassion, he at once alighted to inquire after the wounded. This act cost him his life. Another Nihilist

quickly approached and flung a bomb right at his feet. As soon as the smoke cleared away, Alexander was seen to be frightfully mangled and lying in his blood. He could only murmur, "Quick, home; carry to the palace; there die." There, surrounded by his dearest ones, Alexander II. breathed his last.

In striking down the liberator of the serfs when on the point of recurring to earlier and better methods of rule, the Nihilists had dealt the death-blow to their own cause. As soon as the details of the outrage were known, the old love for the Czar welled forth: his imperfections in public and private life, the seeming weakness of his foreign policy, and his recent use of terrorism against the party of progress were forgotten; and to the sensitive Russian nature, ever prone to extremes, his figure stood forth as the friend of peace, and the would-be reformer, hindered in his efforts by unwise advisers and an untoward destiny.

His successor was a man cast in a different mould. It is one of the peculiarities of the recent history of Russia that her rulers have broken away from the policy of their immediate predecessors to recur to that which they had discarded. The vague and generous Liberalism of Alexander I. gave way in 1825 to the stern autocracy of his brother, Nicholas I. This being shattered by the Crimean War, Alexander II. harked back to the ideals of his uncle, and that, too, in the wavering and unsatisfactory way which had brought woe to that ruler and unrest to the people. Alexander III., raised to the throne by the bombs of the revolutionaries, determined to mould his policy on the principles of autocracy and orthodoxy. To pose as a reformer would have betokened fear of the Nihilists; and

the new ruler, gifted with a magnificent physique, a narrow mind, and a stern will, ever based his conduct on elementary notions that appealed to the peasant and the common soldier. In 1825 Nicholas I. had cowed the would-be rebels at his capital by a display of defiant animal courage. Alexander III. resolved to do the like. He had always been noted for a quiet persistence on which arguments fell in vain. The nickname "bullock," which his father early gave him (shortened by his future subjects to "bull"), sufficiently summed up the supremacy of the material over the mental that characterised the new ruler. Bismarck, who knew him, had a poor idea of his abilities, and summed up his character by saying that he looked at things from the point of view of a Russian peasant.[1] That remark supplies a key to Russian politics during the years 1881–94.

At first, when informed by Melikoff that the late Czar was on the point of making the constitutional experiment described above, Alexander III. exclaimed, "Change nothing in the orders of my father. This shall count as his will and testament." If he had held to this generous resolve the world's history would perhaps have been very different. Had he published his father's last orders; had he appealed to the people, like another Antony over the corpse of Cæsar, the enthusiastic Slav temperament would have eagerly responded to this mark of imperial confidence. Loyalty to the throne and fury against the Nihilists would have been the dominant feelings of the age, impelling all men to make the wisest use of the thenceforth sacred bequest of constitutional freedom.

The man who is believed to have blighted these hopes

[1] *Reminiscences of Bismarck*, by S. Whitman, p. 114; *Bismarck: Some Secret Pages of his History*, by M. Busch, iii., p. 150.

was Pobyedonosteff, the procureur of the highest ecclesiastical court of the Empire. To him had been confided the education of the present Czar; and the fervour of his orthodoxy, as well as the clear-cut simplicity of his belief in Muscovite customs, had gained complete ascendancy over the mind of his pupil. Different estimates have been formed as to the character of Pobyedonosteff. In the eyes of some he is a conscientious zealot who believes in the mission of Holy Russia to vivify an age corrupted by democracy and unbelief; others regard him as the Russian Macchiavelli, straining his beliefs to an extent which his reason rejects, in order to gain power through the mechanism of the autocracy and the Greek Church. The thin face, passionless gaze, and coldly logical utterance bespeak the politician rather than the zealot; yet there seems to be good reason for believing that he is a "fanatic by reflection," not by temperament.[1] A volume of *Reflections* which he has given to the world contains some entertaining judgments on the civilisation of the West. It may be worth while to select a few, as showing the views of the man who, through his pupil, influenced the fate of Russia and of the world.

"Parliament is an institution serving for the satisfaction of the personal ambition, vanity, and self-interest of its members. The institution of Parliament is indeed one of the greatest illustrations of human delusion. . . . On the pediment of this edifice is inscribed, 'All for the public good.' This is no more than a lying formula: Parliamentarism is the triumph of egoism—its highest expression. . . ."

[1] *Russia under Alexander III.*, by H. von Samson-Himmelstierna, Eng. ed., chap. vii.

"From the day that man first fell, falsehood has ruled the world—ruled it in human speech, in the practical business of life, in all its relations and institutions. But never did the Father of Lies spin such webs of falsehood of every kind as in this restless age. . . . The press is one of the falsest institutions of our time."

In the chapter "Power and Authority" the author holds up to the gaze of a weary world a refreshing vision of a benevolent despotism which will save men in spite of themselves:

"Power is the depository of truth, and needs, above all things, men of truth, of clear intellects, of strong understandings, and of sincere speech, who know the limits of 'yes' and 'no,' and never transcend them, etc." [1]

To this Muscovite Laud was now entrusted the task of drafting a manifesto in the interests of "power" and "truth."

Meanwhile the Nihilists themselves had helped on the cause of reaction. Even before the funeral of Alexander II. their executive committee had forwarded to his successor a document beseeching him to give up arbitrary power and to take the people into his confidence. While purporting to impose no conditions, the Nihilist chiefs urged him to remember that two measures were needful preliminaries to any general pacification, namely, a general amnesty of all political offenders, as being merely "executors of a hard civic duty"; and "the convocation of representatives of all the Russian people for a revision and reform of all the private laws of the State, according to the will of the nation." In order that the election of this

[1] *Pobyedonosteff: His Reflections*, Eng. ed.

Assembly might be a reality, the Czar was pressed to grant freedom of speech and of public meetings.[1]

It is difficult to say whether the Nihilists meant this document as an appeal, or whether the addition of the demand of a general amnesty was intended to anger the Czar and drive him into the arms of the reactionaries. In either case, to press for the immediate pardon of his father's murderers appeared to Alexander III. an unpardonable insult. Thenceforth between him and the revolutionaries there could be no truce. As a sop to quiet the more moderate reformers, he ordered the appointment of a commission, including a few members of Zemstvos, and even one peasant, to inquire into the condition of public-houses and the excessive consumption of vodka. Beyond this humdrum though useful question the imperial reformer did not deign to move.

After a short truce, the revolutionaries speedily renewed their efforts against the chief officials who were told off to crush them; but it soon became clear that they had lost the good-will of the middle class. The Liberals looked on them not merely as the murderers of the liberating Czar, but as the destroyers of the nascent constitution; and the masses looked on unmoved while five of the accomplices in the outrage of March 13th were slowly done to death. In the next year twenty-two more suspects were arrested on the same count; ten were hanged and the rest exiled to Siberia. Despite these inroads into the little band of desperadoes, the survivors compassed the murder of the public prosecutor as he sat in a café at Odessa (March 30, 1882). On the other hand, the official police were helped

[1] The whole document is printed in the Appendix to "Stepniak's" *Underground Russia*.

for a time by zealous loyalists who formed a "Holy Band" for secretly countermining the Nihilist organisation. These amateur detectives, however, did little except appropriate large donations, arrest a few harmless travellers, and no small number of the secret police force. The professionals thereupon complained to the Czar, who suppressed the "Holy Band."

The events of the years 1883 and 1884 showed that even the army, on which the Czar was bestowing every care, was permeated with Nihilism, women having by their arts won over many officers to the revolutionary cause. Poland, also, writhing with discontent under the Czar's stern despotism, was worked on with success by their emissaries; and the ardour of the Poles made the recruits especially dangerous to the authorities, ever fearful of another revolt in that unhappy land. Finally, the Czar was fain to shut himself up in nearly complete seclusion in his palace at Gatchina, near St. Petersburg, or in his winter retreat at Livadia, on the southern shores of the Crimea.

These facts are of more than personal and local importance. They powerfully affected the European polity. These were the years which saw the Bulgarian Question come to a climax; and the impotence of Russia enabled that people and their later champions to press on to a solution which would have been impossible had the Czar been free to strike as he undoubtedly willed. For the present he favoured the cause of peace, upheld by his Chancellor, de Giers; and in the autumn of the year 1884, as will be shown in the following chapter, he entered into a compact at Skiernewice, which virtually allotted to Bismarck the arbitration on all urgent questions in the Balkans. As late as November, 1885, we find Sir Robert

Morier, British ambassador at the Russian Court, writing privately and in very homely phrase to his colleague at Constantinople, Sir William White: "I am convinced Russia does not want a general war in Europe about Turkey now, and that she is really suffering from a gigantic *Katzenjammer* (surfeit) caused by the last war."[1] It is safe to say that Bulgaria largely owes her freedom from Russian control to the Nihilists.

For the Czar the strain of prolonged warfare against unseen and desperate foes was terrible. Surrounded by sentries, shadowed by secret police, the lonely man yet persisted in governing with the assiduity and thoroughness of the great Napoleon. He tried to pry into all the affairs of his vast Empire; and, as he held aloof even from his chief ministers, he insisted that they should send to him detailed reports on all the affairs of State, foreign and domestic, military and naval, religious and agrarian. What wonder that the Nihilists persisted in their efforts, in the hope that even his giant strength must break down under the crushing burdens of toil and isolation! That he held up so long shows him to have been one of the strongest men and most persistent workers known to history. He had but one source of inspiration, religious zeal, and but one form of relaxation, the love of his devoted Empress.

It is needless to refer to the later phases of the revolutionary movement. Despite their well-laid plans, the revolutionaries gradually lost ground; and in 1892 even Stepniak confessed that they alone could not hope to overthrow the autocracy. About that time, too, their

[1] *Memoirs and Correspondence of Sir William White*, edited by H. S. Edwards, chap. xviii.

party began to split in twain, a younger group claiming that the old terrorist methods must be replaced by economic propaganda of an advanced socialistic type among the workers of the towns. For this new departure and its results we must refer our readers to the new materials brought to light by Sir D. Mackenzie Wallace in the new edition of his work, *Russia* (1905).

Here we can point out only a few of the more general causes that contributed to the triumph of the Czar. In the first place, the difficulties in the way of common action among the proletariate of Russia are very great. Millions of peasants, scattered over vast plains, where the great struggle is ever against the forces of nature, cannot effectively combine. Students of history will observe that even where the grievances are mainly agrarian, as in the France of 1789, the first definite outbreak is wont to occur in great towns. Russia has no Paris, eager to voice the needs of the many.

Then, again, the Russian peasants are rooted in customs and superstitions which cling about the Czar with strange tenacity and are proof against the reasoning of strangers. Their rising could, therefore, be very partial; besides which the land is for the most part unsuited to the guerrilla tactics that so often have favoured the cause of liberty in mountainous lands. The Czar and his officials know that the strength of their system lies in the ignorance of the peasants, in the soldierly instincts of their immense army, and in the spread of railways and telegraphs, which enable the central power to crush the beginnings of revolt. Thus the Czar's authority, resting incongruously on a faith dumb and grovelling as that of the Dark Ages and on the latest developments of mechanical science, has been able to defy

the tendencies of the age and the strivings of Russian reformers.

The aim of this work prescribes a survey of those events alone which have made modern states what they are to-day; but the victory of absolutism in Russia has had so enormous an influence on the modern world—not least in the warping of democracy in France—that it will be well to examine the operation of other forces which contributed to the setback of reform in that Empire, especially as hey involved a change in the relations of the central power to alien races in general, and to the Grand Duchy of Finland in particular.

These forces, or ideals, may be summed up in the old Slavophil motto, "Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality." These old Muscovite ideals had lent strength to Nicholas I. in his day; and his grandson now determined to appeal to the feeling of nationality in its narrowest and strongest form. That instinct, which Mazzini looked on as the means of raising in turn all the peoples of the world to the loftier plane of Humanity, was now to be the chief motive in the propulsion of the Juggernaut car of the Russian autocracy.

The first to feel the weight of the governmental machine were the Jews. Rightly or wrongly, they were thought to be concerned in the peculations that disgraced the campaign of 1877 and in the plot for the murder of Alexander II. In quick succession the officials and the populace found out that outrages on the Jews would not be displeasing at headquarters. The secret once known, the rabble of several towns took the law into their own hands. In scores of places throughout the years 1881 and 1882,

the mob plundered and fired their shops and houses, beat the wretched inmates, and in some cases killed them outright. At Elisabetgrad and Kiev the Jewish quarters were systematically pillaged and then given over to the flames. The fury reached its climax at the small town of Balta ; the rabble pillaged 976 Jewish houses, and, not content with seizing all the wealth that came to hand, killed eight of the traders, besides wounding 211 others.

Doubtless these outrages were largely due to race-hatred as well as to spite on the part of the heedless, slovenly natives against the keen and grasping Hebrews. The same feelings have at times swept over Roumania, Austria, Germany, and France. Jew-baiting has appealed even to nominally enlightened peoples as a novel and profitable kind of sport; and few of its votaries have had the hypocritical effrontery to cloak their conduct under the plea of religious zeal. The movement has at bottom everywhere been a hunt after Jewish treasure, embittered by the hatred of the clown for the successful trader, of the individualist native for an alien, clannish, and successful community. In Russia religious motives may possibly have weighed with the Czar and the more ignorant and bigoted of the peasantry; but levelling and communistic ideas certainly accounted for the widespread plundering—witness the words often on the lips of the rioters: "We are breakfasting on the Jews; we shall dine on the landlords, and sup on the priests." In 1890 there appeared a ukase ordering the return of the Jews to those provinces and districts where they had been formerly allowed to settle, that is, chiefly in the South and West; and all foreign Jews were expelled from the Empire. It is believed that as

many as 225,000 Jewish families left Russia in the sixteen months following.[1]

The next onslaught was made against a body of Christian dissenters, the humble community known as Stundists. These God-fearing peasants had taken a German name because the founder of their sect had been converted at the *Stunden*, or hour-long services, of German Lutherans long settled in the south of Russia; they held a simple evangelical faith; their conduct was admittedly far better than that of the peasants, who held to the mass of customs and superstitions dignified by the name of the orthodox Greek creed; and their piety and zeal served to spread the evangelical faith, especially among the more emotional people of South Russia, known as Little Russians.

Up to the year 1878, Alexander II. refrained from persecuting them, possibly because he felt some sympathy with men who were fast raising themselves and their fellows above the old level of brutish ignorance. But in that year the Greek Church pressed him to take action. If he chastised them with whips, his son lashed them with scorpions. He saw that they were sapping the base of one of the three pillars that supported the imperial fabric—orthodoxy, in the Russian sense. Orders went forth to stamp out the heretic pest. At once all the strength of the governmental machine was brought to bear on these non-resisting peasants. Imprisonment, exile, execution,—such was their lot. Their communities, perhaps the happiest then to be found in rural Russia, were broken up, to be flung into remote corners of Transcaucasia or Siberia, and there

[1] Rambaud, *Histoire de la Russie*, chap. xxxviii.; Lowe, *Alexander III. of Russia*, chap. viii.; H. Frederic, *The New Exodus;* Professor Errera, *The Russian Jews.*

doomed to the *régime* of the knout or the darkness of the mines.[1] According to present appearances the persecutors have succeeded. The evangelical faith seems to have been almost stamped out even in South Russia; and the Greek Church has regained its hold on the allegiance, if not on the beliefs and affections, of the masses.

To account for this fact, we must remember the immense force of tradition and custom among a simple rural folk, also that very many Russians sincerely believe that their institutions and their national creed were destined to regenerate Europe. See, they said in effect, Western Europe oscillates between Papal control and free thought; its industries, with their *laissez-faire* methods, raise the few to enormous wealth and crush the many into a new serfdom worse than the old. For all these evils Russia has a cure; her autocracy saves her from the profitless wrangling of Parliaments; her national Church sums up the beliefs and traditions of nobles and peasants; and at the base of her social system she possesses in the "Mir" a patriarchial communism against which the forces of the West will beat in vain. Looking on the Greek Church as a necessary part of the national life, they sought to wield its powers for nationalising all the races of that motley Empire. "Russia for the Russians!" cried the Slavophils. "Let us be one people, with one creed. Let us reverence the Czar as head of the Church and of the State. In this unity lies our strength." However defective the argument logically, yet in the realm of sentiment, in which the Slavs live, move, and have their being, the plea passed muster. National pride was pressed into the service of the

[1] See an article by Count Leo Tolstoy in the *Contemporary Review* for November, 1895; also a pamphlet on *The Stundists*, with Preface by Rev. J. Brown, D.D.

persecutors; and all dissenters, whether Roman Catholics of Poland, Lutherans of the Baltic provinces, or Stundists of the Ukraine, felt the remorseless grinding of the State machine, while the Greek Church exalted its horn as it had not done for a century past.

Other sides of this narrowly nationalising policy were seen in the determined repression of Polish feeling, of the Germans in the Baltic provinces, and of the Armenians of Transcaucasia. Finally, remorseless pressure was brought to bear on that interesting people, the Finns. We can here refer only to the last of these topics. The Germans in the provinces of Livonia, Courland, and Esthonia formed the majority only among the landholding and merchant classes; and the curbing of their semi-feudal privileges wore the look of a democratic reform.

The case was far different with the Finns. They are a non-Aryan people, and therefore differ widely from the Swedes and Russians. For centuries they formed part of the Swedish monarchy, deriving thence in large measure their literature, civilisation, and institutions. To this day the Swedish tongue is used by about one-half of their gentry and burghers. On the annexation of Finland by Alexander I., in consequence of the Franco-Russian compact framed at Tilsit in 1807, he made to their Estates a solemn promise to respect their constitution and laws. Similar engagements have been made by his successors. Despite some attempts by Nicholas I. to shelve the constitution of the Grand Duchy, local liberties remained almost intact up to a comparatively recent time. In the year 1869 the Finns gained further guarantees of their rights. Alexander II. then ratified the laws of Finland,

and caused a statement of the relations between Finland and Russia to be drawn up.

In view of the recent struggle between the Czar and the Finnish people, it may be well to give a sketch of their constitution. The sovereign governs, not as Emperor of Russia, but as Grand Duke of Finland. He delegates his administrative powers to a Senate, which is presided over by a Governor-General. This important official, as a matter of fact, has always been a Russian; his powers are, or rather were,[1] shared by two sections of the Finnish Senate each composed of ten members nominated by the Grand Duke. The Senate prepares laws and ordinances which the Grand Duke then submits to the Diet. This body consists of four orders—nobles, clergy, burghers, and peasants. Since 1886 it has enjoyed to a limited extent the right of initiating laws. The orders sit and vote separately. In most cases a resolution that is passed by three of them becomes law, when it has received the assent of the Grand Duke. But the assent of a majority in each of the four orders is needed in the case of a proposal that affects the constitution of the Grand Duchy and the privileges of the orders. In case a bill is accepted by two orders and is rejected by the other two, a deadlock is averted by each of the orders appointing fifteen delegates; these sixty delegates, meeting without discussion, vote by ballot, and a bare majority carries the day. Measures are then referred to the Grand Duke, who, after consulting the Senate, gives or withholds his assent.[2]

[1] A law of the autumn of 1902 altered this. It delegated the administration to the Governor-General, *assisted by* the Senate.

[2] For the constitution of Finland and its relation to Russia, see *A Précis of the Public Law of Finland*, by L. Mechelin, translated by C. J. Cooke (1889); *Pour la Finlande*, par Jean Deck; *Pour la*

A very important clause of the law of 1869 declares that "Fundamental laws can be made, altered, explained, or repealed, only on the representation of the Emperor and Grand Duke, and with the consent of all the Estates." This clause sharply marked off Finland from Russia, where the power of the Czar is theoretically unlimited. New taxes may not be imposed nor old taxes altered without the consent of the Finnish Diet; but, strange to say, the customs dues are fixed by the Government (that is, by the Grand Duke and the Senate) without the co-operation of the Diet. Despite the archaic form of its representation, the Finnish constitution (an offshoot of that of Sweden) has worked extremely well; and in regard to civil freedom and religious toleration, the Finns take their place among the most progressive communities of the world. Moreover, the constitution is no recent and artificial creation; it represents customs and beliefs that are deeply ingrained in a people who, like their Magyar kinsmen, cling firmly to the old, even while they hopefully confront the facts of the present. There was every ground for hope. Between the years 1812 and 1886 the population grew from 900,000 to 2,300,000, and the revenue from less than 7,000,000 marks (a Finnish mark = about ten pence) to 40,000,000 marks.

Possibly this prosperity prompted in the Russian bureaucracy the desire to bring the Grand Duchy into line with the rest of the Empire. On grounds other than constitutional, the bureaucrats had a case. They argued that while the revenue of Finland was increasing faster than

Finlande, La Constitution du Grand Duché de Finlande (Paris, 1900); J. R. Danielsson, *Finland's Union with the Russian Empire* (Borga, 1891).

that of Russia proper, yet the Grand Duchy bore no share of the added military burdens. It voted only 17 per cent. of its revenue for military defence as against 28 per cent. set apart in the Russian Budget. The fact that the Swedish and Finnish languages, as well as Finnish money, were alone used on the railways of the Grand Duchy, even within a few miles of St. Petersburg, also formed a cause of complaint. When, therefore, the Slavophils began to raise a hue and cry against everything that marred the symmetry of the Empire, an anti-Finnish campaign lay in the nature of things. Historical students discovered that the constitution was the gift of the Czars, and that their goodwill had been grossly misused by the Finns. Others, who could not deny the validity of the Finnish constitution, claimed that even constitutions and laws must change with changing circumstances; that a narrow particularism was out of place in an age of railways and telegraphs; and that Finland must take its fair share in the work of national defence.[1]

Little by little Alexander III. put in force this Slavophil creed against Finland. His position as Grand Duke gave him the right of initiating laws; but he overstepped his constitutional powers by imposing various changes. In January, 1890, he appointed three committees, sitting at St. Petersburg, to bring the coinage, the customs system, and the postal service of Finland into harmony with those of Russia. In June there appeared an imperial ukase assimilating the postal service of Finland to that of Russia—

[1] See for the Russian case d'Élenew, *Les Prétentions des Séparatistes finlandais* (1895); also *La Conquête de la Finlande*, by K. Ordine (1889)—answered by J. R. Danielsson, *op. cit.*; also *Russland und Finland vom russischen Standpunkte aus betrachtet*, by "Sarmatus" (1903).

an illegal act which led to the resignation of the Finnish ministers. In May, 1891, the Committee for Finnish Affairs, sitting at St. Petersburg, was abolished; and that year saw other efforts curbing the liberty of the press, and extending the use of the Russian language in the government of the Grand Duchy.

The trenches having now been pushed forward against the outworks of Finnish freedom, an assault was prepared against the ramparts—the constitution itself. The assailants discovered in it a weak point, a lack of clearness in the clauses specifying the procedure to be followed in matters where common action had to be taken in Finland and in Russia. They saw here a chance of setting up an independent authority, which, under the guise of *interpreting* the constitution, could be used for its suspension and overthrow. A committee, consisting of six Russians and four Finns, was appointed at the close of the year 1892 to codify laws and take the necessary action. It sat at St. Petersburg; but the opposition of the Finnish members, backed up by the public opionion of the whole Duchy, sufficed to postpone any definite decision. Probably this time of respite was due to the reluctance felt by Alexander III. in his closing days to push matters to an extreme.

The alternating tendencies so well marked in the generations of the Romanoff rulers made themselves felt at the accession of Nicholas II. (November 1, 1894). Lacking the almost animal force which carried Alexander III. so far in certain grooves, he resembles the earlier sovereigns of that name in the generous cosmopolitanism and dreamy good-nature which shed an autumnal haze over their careers. Unfortunately the reforming Czars have been without the grit of the crowned Boyars, who trusted in

Cossack, priest, and knout; and too often they have bent before the reactionary influences, always strong at the Russian Court. To this peculiarity in the nature of Nicholas II. we may probably refer the oscillations in his Finnish policy. In the first years of his reign he gradually abated the rigour of his father's *régime*, and allowed greater liberty of the press in Finland. The number of articles suppressed sank from 216 in the year 1893 to 40 in 1897.[1]

The hopes aroused by this display of moderation soon vanished. Early in 1898 the appointment of General Kuropatkin to the Ministry for War for Russia foreboded evil to the Grand Duchy. The new Minister speedily counselled the exploitation of the resources of Finland for the benefit of the Empire. Already the Russian general staff had made efforts in this direction; and now Kuropatkin, supported by the whole weight of the Slavophil party, sought to convince the Czar of the danger of leaving the Finns with a separate military organisation. A military committee, in which there was only one Finn, the Minister Procope, had for some time been sitting at St. Petersburg, and finally gained over Nicholas II. to its views. He is said to have formed his final decision during his winter stay at Livadia in the Crimea, owing to the personal intervention of Kuropatkin, and that, too, in face of a protest from the Finnish Minister, Procope, against the suspension by imperial ukase of a fundamental law of the Grand Duchy. The Czar must have known of the unlawfulness of the present procedure, for on November 6–18, 1894, shortly after his accession, he signed the following declaration:

". . . We have hereby desired to confirm and ratify

[1] *Pour la Finlande*, par Jean Deck, p. 36.

the religion, the fundamental laws, the rights and privileges of every class in the said Grand Duchy, in particular, and all its inhabitants high and low in general, which they, according to the constitution of this country, had enjoyed, promising to preserve the same steadfastly and in full force."[1]

The military system of Finland having been definitely organised by the Finnish law of 1878, that statute clearly came within the scope of those "fundamental laws" which Nicholas II. had promised to uphold in full force. We can imagine, then, the astonishment which fell on the Finnish Diet and people on the presentation of the famous Imperial Manifesto of February 3–15, 1899. While expressing a desire to leave purely Finnish affairs to the consideration of the Government and Diet of the Grand Duchy, the Czar warned his Finnish subjects that there were others that could not be so treated, seeing that they were "closely bound up with the needs of the whole Empire." As the Finnish constitution pointed out no way of treating such subjects, it was needful now to complete the existing institutions of the Duchy. The Manifesto proceeded as follows:

"Whilst maintaining in full force the now prevailing statutes which concern the promulgation of local laws touching exclusively the internal affairs of Finland, We have found it necessary to reserve to Ourselves the ultimate decision as to which laws come within the scope of the general legislation of the Empire. With this in view, We have with Our Royal Hand established and confirmed the

[1] *The Rights of Finland*, p. 4 (Stockholm, 1899). See, too, for the whole question, *Finland and the Tsars*, 1809–1899, by J. R. Fisher (London, 2nd ed., 1900).

fundamental statutes for the working out, revision, and promulgation of laws issued for the Empire, including the Grand Duchy of Finland, which are proclaimed simultaneously herewith." [1]

The accompanying enactments made it clear that the Finnish Diet would thenceforth have only consultative duties in respect to any measure which seemed to the Czar to involve the interests of Russia as well as of Finland. In fact, the proposals of February 15th struck at the root of the constitution, subjecting it in all important matters to the will of the autocrat at St. Petersburg. At once the Finns saw the full extent of the calamity. They observed the following Sunday as a day of mourning; the people of Helsingfors, the capital, gathered around the statue of Alexander II., the organiser of their liberties, as a mute appeal to the generous instincts of his grandson. Everywhere, even in remote villages, solemn meetings of protest were held; but no violent act marred the impressiveness of these demonstrations attesting the surprise and grief of a loyal people.

By an almost spontaneous impulse a petition was set on foot begging the Czar to reconsider his decision. If ever a petition deserved the name "national," it was that of Finland. Towns and villages signed almost *en masse*. Ski-runners braved the hardships of a severe winter in the effort to reach remote villages within the Arctic Circle; and within five days (March 10–14) 529,931 names were signed, the marks of illiterates being rejected. All was in vain. The Czar refused to receive the petition, and ordered the bearers of it to return home.[2]

[1] *The Rights of Finland*, pp. 6–7; also in *Pour la Finlande*, par J. Deck, p. 43.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 23–30.

The Russian Governor-General of Finland then began a brisk campaign against the Finnish newspapers. Four were promptly suppressed, while there were forty-three cases of "suspension" in the year 1899 alone. The public administration also underwent a drastic process of russification, Finnish officials and policemen being in very many cases ousted by Muscovites. Early in the year 1901 local postage stamps gave place to those of the Empire. Above all, General Kuropatkin was able almost completely to carry out his designs against the Finnish army, the law of 1901 practically abolishing the old constitutional force and compelling Finns to serve in any part of the Empire —in defiance of the old statutes which limited their services to the Grand Duchy itself.

The later developments of this interesting question fall without the scope of this volume. We can therefore only state that the steadfast opposition of the Finns to these illegal proceedings led to still harsher treatment, and that the few concessions granted since the outbreak of the Japanese War have apparently failed to soothe the resentment aroused by the former unprovoked attacks upon the liberties of Finland.

One fact, which cannot fail to elicit the attention of thoughtful students of contemporary history, is the absence of able leaders in the popular struggles of the age. Whether we look at the orderly resistance of the Finns, the efforts of the Russian revolutionaries, or the fitful efforts now and again put forth by the Poles, the same discouraging symptom is everywhere apparent. More than once the hour seemed to have struck for the overthrow of the old order, but no man appeared. Other instances might,

of course, be cited to show that the adage about the hour and the man is more picturesque than true. The democratic movements of 1848–49 went to pieces largely owing to the coyness of the requisite hero. Or, rather, perhaps we ought to say that the heroes were there, in the persons of Cavour and Garibaldi, Bismarck and Moltke, but no one was at hand to set them in the places which they filled so ably in 1858–70. Will the future see the hapless, unguided efforts of to-day championed in an equally masterful way? If so, the next generation may see strange things happen in Russia, as also elsewhere.

Two suggestions may be advanced, with all diffidence, as to the reasons for the absence of great leaders in the movements of to-day. As we noted in the chapter dealing with the suppression of the Paris Commune of 1871, the centralised governments now have a great material advantage in dealing with local disaffection, owing to their control of telegraphs, railways, and machine-guns. This fact tells with crushing force, not only at the time of popular rising, but also on the men who work to that end. Little assurance was needed in the old days to compass the overthrow of Italian Dukes and German Translucencies. To-day he would be a man of boundlessly inspiring power who could hopefully challenge Czar or Kaiser to a conflict. The other advantage which Governments possess is in the intellectual sphere. There can be no doubt that the mere size of the States and Governments of the present age exercises a deadening effect on the minds of individuals. As the vastness of London produces inertia in civic affairs, so, too, the great Empires tend to deaden the initiative and boldness of their subjects. Those priceless qualities are always seen to greatest advantage in small states like

the Athens of Pericles, the England of Elizabeth, or the Geneva of Rousseau; they are stifled under the pyramidal mass of the Empire of the Czars; and as a result there is seen a respectable mediocrity, equal only to the task of organising street demonstrations and abortive mutinies. It may be that in the future some commanding genius will arise, able to free himself from the paralysing incubus, to fire the dull masses with hope, and to turn the very vastness of the governmental machine into a means of destruction. But, for that achievement, he will need the magnetism of a Mirabeau, the savagery of a Marat, and the organising powers of a Bonaparte.

END OF VOLUME I

AMERICAN HISTORY

THE THIRTEEN COLONIES

By HELEN AINSLIE SMITH, author of "One Hundred Famous Americans," etc. 2 volumes, fully illustrated. Cloth, $3.00. Half leather, gilt top, $3.50.

"The books are lucid, direct, and simple, and will make an excellent addition to any historical library, condensing as they do, within two volumes, the facts for which the student must ordinarily search far."—*The Interior.*

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

By EDWIN ERLE SPARKS, Ph.D., author of "The Expansion of the American People," etc. 2 volumes, fully illustrated. Cloth, net $2.70. Half leather, gilt top, net $3.20. (Postage, 30c.)

This narrative traces the gradual evolution of a confederated Republic under the laws of necessity; acknowledges that radical departures have been made from first ideals as a result of progress; takes into constant consideration the underlying forces of heredity and environment. In brief, these two volumes tell the story of the *United* States. They show how the phrase "the United States *is*" has been slowly and unconsciously evolved in the process of time from the early practice of saying "the United States *are*."

THE SOUTH AMERICAN REPUBLICS

By THOMAS C. DAWSON, late Secretary American Legation, Brazil. 2 volumes, fully illustrated. Cloth, net $2.70. Half leather, gilt top, net $3.20. (Postage, 30 cts.)

"The book is a worthy addition to a series which has included a number of first class monographs . . . The author's English is clear and direct. . . . He uses excellent judgment in the selection and arrangement of his material, and he tells his story as one who knows the story well himself and who is able to make it plain to his readers. . . . Few works of fiction can boast of more undiluted romance than can be found in the history of South America."—*The Providence Journal.*

THE STORY OF CANADA

By J. G. BOURINOT, C.M.G., LL.D., D.C.L. Fully illustrated, with maps. Cloth, $1.50. Half leather, gilt top, $1.75.

"Dr. Bourinot has admirably executed his work. . . . He has been impartial, sincere, loyal, accurate, and clear-sighted, and his simplicity of style and vigor of intellect, joined to the interest of the subject, make the book of exceeding benefit and interest to the Dominion of Canada and to the British Empire."—*The Critic.*

THE STORY OF MEXICO

By Susan Hale. Fully illustrated. Cloth, $1.50. Half leather, gilt top, $1.75.

"One of the most fascinating of the series. . . . It is not too much to say that nowhere else within the same compass will be found so clear, accurate, vivid, and at the same time, so thoroughly comprehensive a narrative of Mexico's past, combined with a description of her future."—*Boston Traveller.*

The above titles are taken from the "Story of the Nations Series," comprising 74 titles.

Descriptive circular may be had on application.

New York G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS London

The United States

1607–1904

A History of Three Centuries of Progress in Population, Politics, Industry, Commerce, and Civilization

By WILLIAM ESTABROOK CHANCELLOR and FLETCHER WILLIS HEWES

In ten parts, each in one octavo volume, handsomely printed in pica type. Fully illustrated, each, net, $3.50 (carriage 25 cents). Volumes sold separately.

Some comments concerning the volumes now ready:

"The initial volume establishes a high standard of excellence. The authors have evolved a plan which will secure for their work a unique position in the long series of American histories. Both men are admirably fitted for their respective tasks. . . . The volume at hand treats in a most thorough manner the subject of the colonization of the North American continent. . . . Mr. Chancellor has accomplished with striking success the difficult task of putting fresh life into a tale that has been told over and over again. His language is terse and vigorous, and he has a dramatic way of presenting events which animate even the dullest, most prosaic facts. His characterizations are brief, but illuminating. The statistical work of Mr. Hewes constitutes a most distinctive contribution to American history. . . . The numerous maps, charts, and diagrams constitute an invaluable feature of the work."—*Newark News.*

"The dramatic style of Mr. Chancellor's history and the distinctive value of the comprehensive records presented by Mr. Hewes concerning industry and commerce, should assuredly render this a popular work."—*San Francisco Chronicle.*

"The books are fully up to the Putnam standard of book making. They are simple, elegant, and durable."—*Rochester Herald.*

Send for complete descriptive circular

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

New York **London**

EUROPEAN HISTORY

The Story of Germany

By SABINE BARING-GOULD, M.A., author of "Curious Myths of the Middle Ages," etc. 12°. Fully illustrated. Cloth, $1.50. Half-leather, gilt top, $1.75.

"A well-written and scholarly history of Germany. . . . Every page of this admirable history reads like a grand romance, and the volume will be found an invaluable contribution to our national literature."—*Chicago Inter-Ocean.*

The Story of Scotland

By JOHN MACKINTOSH, LL.D., author of "History of Civilization in Scotland," etc. 12°. Fully illustrated. Cloth, $1.50. Half-leather, gilt top, $1.75.

"As a general introduction to the study of our national history we commend this work. So far as it goes it is thoroughly reliable and candid, and its style is interesting. It states facts simply and correctly, and in these respects it is a model volume in a model series of popular histories."—*Scotch-American.*

The Story of the Building of the British Empire

The Story of England's Growth from Elizabeth to Victoria

By ALFRED THOMAS STORY, author of "The Life of John Linnell," etc. Two volumes. 12°. Fully illustrated. Each, Cloth, $1.50. Half-leather, $1.75.

"Mr. Story's volumes are the most successful attempt to put all the vital incidents in the growth and development of a great nation into a convenient compass for the needs of readers and students of limited time that has yet been made. . . . The work is one of remarkable interest, and is written with an impartiality and fairness wherever American topics are treated which may well serve as a model for English historians."—*Boston Transcript.*

The Story of Mediæval France

From the Reign of Hugues Capet to the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century

By GUSTAVE MASSON, B.A., of Harrow School, England. 12°. Fully illustrated. Cloth, $1.50. Half-leather, $1.75.

"No middle-age history is more fascinating than that of Feudal France; and Mr. Masson has met his subject with a true appreciation. Whilst the romantic features of that life are displayed in a vigorous narrative of the doings of court and camp, more serious topics — as the communal movements, scholasticism, financial reforms, the *Parlement* of Paris, literature, science, art,—receive adequate treatment."—*Dial.*

The Story of the Normans

Told Chiefly in Relation to Their Conquest of England.

By SARAH ORNE JEWETT. 12°. Fully illustrated. Cloth, $1.75.

"The habits, life, and history of this race are interesting and romantic in the extreme, and Miss Jewett's pleasing style gives us a book which is, therefore, decidedly readable. It is a fascinating story from beginning to end."—*Boston Times.*

The above titles are taken from "The Story of the Nations Series," comprising 75 titles. Descriptive circular may be had on application.

New York— G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS —*London*

EUROPEAN HISTORY

The Historical Development of Modern Europe

From the Congress of Vienna to the Present Time

By CHARLES M. ANDREWS, Associate Professor of History in Bryn Mawr College. Two volumes. Sold separately. With maps. 8°. Gilt top, each, $2.50.

Part I.—From 1815 to 1850. **Part II.—From 1850 to 1897.**

Student's Edition. Two volumes in one, net, $2.75.

"The work is to be commended both for the accuracy of its scholarship and for its popular mode of treatment."—*The Churchman.*

"The work is an important addition to the literature of an historical period complicated in its many movements and interactions, and to us of to-day near, important, and deeply interesting."—*Public Opinion.*

A History of Greece

By EVELYN ABBOTT, M.A., LL.D., Late Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford. Three parts. 8°. Each $2.25.

Part I.—From the Earliest Time to the Ionian Revolt.

Part II.—From the Beginning of the Ionian Revolt to the Thirty Years' Peace, 500–445 B.C.

Part III.—From the Thirty Years' Peace to the Fall of the Thirty at Athens, 445–403 B.C.

"It will certainly supply the want of a careful and thorough work, occupying the place between the ordinary brief histories and the more elaborate works of Curtius, Grote, Thirlwall, and Mitford."—Prof. W. C. MOREY.

"A delightful book as well for the professional scholar as for the cultivated reader."—Prof. T. D. SEYMOUR, Yale Univ.

A History of the People of the Netherlands

By PETRUS JOHANNES BLOK, Ph.D., Professor of Dutch History in the University of Leyden. Translated by RUTH PUTNAM.

To be completed in five parts. 8°. Each fully illustrated, together with maps, $2.50.

Part I.—The Netherlands from the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the Fifteenth Century.

Part II.—The Gradual Centralization of Power and the Burgundian Period.

Part III.—The War of Independence, 1568–1621.

"This is the standard history of the whole Netherlands, and the author may be congratulated on finding so excellent a translator. . . . She has saturated her mind with the thoughts and general sweep of the author's mind, and with that thorough mastery of the language which would enable her to give a perfect literal translation she does what is far better. She makes a free, flowing, yet thoroughly representative version that accurately reproduces the spirit, the color, the vigor, and the charm of the original."—*Literary World.*

Outlines of Roman History

By Prof. H. F. PELHAM, University of Oxford. With maps printed in colors. 12°. $1.75.

"It is much fuller than outline sketches are apt to be; the plan is well conceived and carried out, and the author shows throughout a rare power of grasping the most important points and exhibiting them clearly and in simple language. It is undoubtedly the work of a man well acquainted with the best ancient and modern authorities, of one who certainly acknowledges his indebtedness constantly, and yet does not hesitate to differ frankly, when he feels that he must, even from such chiefs as Mommsen."—*The Nation.*

New York— G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS —*London*

THIS BOOK IS DUE ON THE LAST DATE STAMPED BELOW

AN INITIAL FINE OF 25 CENTS
WILL BE ASSESSED FOR FAILURE TO RETURN THIS BOOK ON THE DATE DUE. THE PENALTY WILL INCREASE TO 50 CENTS ON THE FOURTH DAY AND TO $1.00 ON THE SEVENTH DAY OVERDUE.

OCT 18 1946

OCT 23 1946

FEB 6 1948

Due end of WINTER Quarter
subject to recall after FEB 15'71 71

REC'D LD FEB 5 71-1 PM 35

IN STACKS FEB 1 '71

LD 21-100m-7,'40 (6936s)

LD 9-30m-4,'70(N5878s4)4185—C-107 M1

YC 29424

MAR 2 1941

215320

D395
R7
v.1

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY